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operations, unless through special circumstances it acts extraordinarily ; then it acts on human consciousness with peculiar force. Thus, when a man gains a fortune or is saved from a danger by an accident as it were, or narrowly escapes death through the intervention of unforeseen or supernatural circumstances, he speaks loudly of the grace of God, and thanks the Lord from the bottom of his heart.

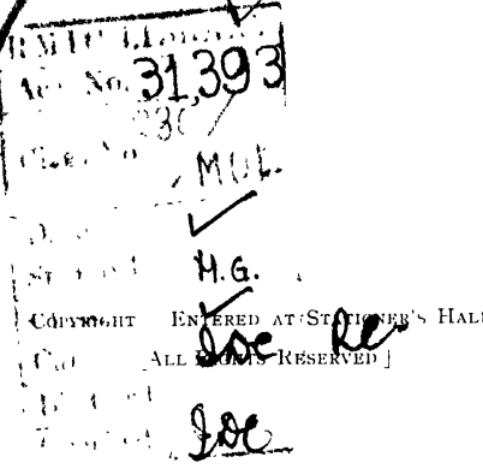
In the spiritual world the working of the grace of God is most significant. The Lord is said to have declared to His children, " My grace is sufficient for you." It is impossible for us to comprehend the scope of divine grace for the salvation of man. When man goes on sinning and disobeying his God, the spirit of God is said to be grieved. The sentiment embodied in the following beautiful hymn about the grace of God is significant :—

" Thy grace, O Thou Mother, weeps from door to door,
Seeing the degradation of the creatures,
It sheds tears in thousand streams."

It is the grace of God whereby a sinner is constrained to change his course from unrighteousness to righteousness. With the greatest of sinners dwells the grace of God, and protects him from running into greater sin and thereby imperilling his salvation the more. It is the grace of God that restrains the angry and the vindictive from murdering those who irritate them. The avaricious and the man of unclean heart is saved by divine grace from committing theft or sinking into the depths of debauchery. As in the physical world man lives in the midst of death, so in the spiritual world man has his being in the midst of direful temptations and trials which at any moment can hurl him headlong into the vortex of hell.

THE
YOGA OF CHRIST
OR THE
SCIENCE OF THE SOUL
WRITTEN DOWN BY A.K.G.
EDITED BY
F. HENRIETTA MULLER, B.A.

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A LOVING TRIBUTE

TO

HIS MOTHER

FROM

A. K. G.

PREFATORY NOTE.

IN the *Mahabharata*, Soiva says to Daksha :—

“ With the aid of arguments addressed to reason the Deities and the Dānavas have extracted from the Vedas, consisting of six branches, and from the system of Sāṅkhya and Yoga, a creed, in consequence of which they have practised the austerest penances for many long years.

“ The religion, however, which I have extracted, is unparalleled, and productive of benefits on every side. It is open to men in all modes of life to practise it.

“ It leads to emancipation. It may be acquired in many years, or through merit by persons who have restrained their senses. It is shrouded in mystery. They that are divested of wisdom regard it as censurable. It is opposed to the duties laid down in respect of the four orders of man, and the four modes of life, and agrees with those duties in only a few particulars. They that are well-skilled in the science of (drawing) conclusions (from premises) can understand its propriety ; and they who have transcended all the modes of life are worthy of adopting it.

“ In the ‘days of yore, O Daksha, this auspicious religion called Pāçupata had been extracted by me. The proper observance of that religion produces immense benefits. Let those benefits be thine, O highly blessed one ! cast off this fever of thy heart ! ”

PREFACE.

The manuscript of this work was placed in my hands by A.K.G., who had received it from an Indian Teacher, for whom I have the deepest gratitude, love and reverence, who requested that I should edit and publish it.

That Christianity, the religion which the West has made peculiarly its own, should be reverentially taught by "an Indian" from an Indian point of view, is in itself unusual, and may be regarded as a happy omen of the ultimate breaking down of those barriers of Sectarianism which have hitherto been potent in dividing the English people from sympathetic communion with the natives of India.

Still more new is the interpretation here offered of some of the Christian doctrines. To the orthodox or sectarian Christian, who is satisfied with present-day interpretations of Christ's teaching and with the manner of life of his followers, these words will bring no help.

But there is a large class of devout souls who find neither satisfying Truth nor edifying practice in modern Christianity; they believe, nevertheless, that Christ had a message for them, and that somewhere hidden beneath the noise of words, and the misinterpretations of sectarians, a Truth, divine and living, may be found; to them the following pages will bring, if not the full radiance of Christ's illuminating Love, at least many

valuable suggestions for thought, and aids in the solution of difficult problems.

I believe that the true Theosophist is one who has penetrated so far beneath the diverse forms and appearances of things, that HE KNOWS GOD'S TRUTH TO BE UNIVERSALLY MANIFESTED THROUGH AND BY EVERY FORM OF RELIGION. He therefore looks to find different aspects of that Truth exemplified in different religions and practised by the followers of them.

All religions teach all virtues, but each great religion teaches and exemplifies especially one virtue or one aspect of Truth in paramount degree. Thus, I believe (without a desire to dogmatise), that Christ has established amongst us Western nations the religion of, ALTRUISM, the law of Love and Liberty; an aspect of Divine Truth which is not so prominently brought forward in Eastern Scriptures, nor so fully recognised in the life of Eastern people. On the other hand, the ancient Eastern Scriptures, which I believe to be inspired by God as our Bible is, contain a body of teaching which is only vaguely and dimly outlined in our Christian Bible.

It is called YOGA or the Science of the Soul.

The soul of man—in the East as in the West—realizing its loneliness and separateness, longs, desires, and ever aspires to be reunited with its God. The children, having lost their Heavenly Father and Mother, are restless and homeless.

Home and rest with our Father and our Mother—re-union with our God—may be obtained by each one of God's children.

“Narrow is the path,” Christ said, “and few there

be that find it." The Science of the Soul, or Yoga, teaches us how we may find it.

"Greater is he that conquereth his spirit," said Christ, "than he that taketh a city."

Yoga teaches us how to conquer the spirit. As Number gives a LANGUAGE common to all Sciences, so Yoga gives a METHOD common to all religions, but it is most ably set forth in the eastern religions.

It shows us a METHOD OF THOUGHT OR A SYSTEM of effort by which we may acquire self-knowledge and self-control, by which self-deception and the power of illusion, which now alone mislead us and separate us from our Heavenly Parents, may be destroyed. Teaching the highest moral and divine law, Christ says, "Do this or that." Yoga places in our hands a lever of immense power by which we may do it. This method of thought, this systematised effort, is not unknown to modern and mediæval Christianity, but in its marvellous perfection and exquisite beauty it is chiefly found in the East.

Yoga is a peculiar practice of meditation, or the highest and purest form of prayer, leading to spiritual re-union or liberation. The "Theosophical Glossary" says: "Psycho-spiritual powers are obtained thereby . . . and a clear and correct perception of eternal truths, in both the visible and invisible universe."

"It gives him full control, owing to his knowledge of the (Higher) Self and the (Lower) Self, over his bodily, intellectual, and mental states, which (the control being ABSOLUTE) are unable any longer to interfere with, or act upon his Higher Self, and leave it in its pure and divine state."

This divine state of the soul is frequently spoken of by Christ as the "Kingdom of God," or the "Kingdom of Heaven."

These letters do not contain detailed instructions for the practice of Yoga, but offer a means of preliminary preparation of the Heart and Mind, to those who seek it.

I shall be happy to receive comments or questions on any practical difficulties which readers may desire to offer, and shall do my best to help inquirers to clear up their difficulties, but I do not invite controversial discussion.

THE EDITOR.

November, 1894.

Address THE EDITOR OF "THE YOGA OF CHRIST,"

THEOSOPHICAL PUBLISHING SOCIETY,
7, DUKE STREET, ADELPHI,
LONDON.

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

CHAP			PAGE
	PREFACE	...	vii
I.	THE YOGA OF CHRIST	...	2
II.	THE THREEFOLD YOGA	...	6
III.	THE YOGA OF CHRIST AND OF KRISHNA COMPARED	...	10
IV.	THE FATHERHOOD AND MOTHERHOOD OF GOD	...	15
V.	THREEFOLD OBEDIENCE	...	20
VI.	"WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST?"	...	24
VII.	FAITH	...	29
VIII.	THE HUMANITY IN GOD	...	31
IX.	THE HOLY SPIRIT	...	35
X.	ENTHUSIASM OF HUMANITY	...	40
XI.	MUTUAL OBEDIENCE	...	44
XII.	WOMAN AND MAN	...	47
XIII.	PARALLELISM OF THE SEXES	...	51
XIV.	PLATO'S PRECEPTS TO ARISTOTLE	...	52
XV.	FIRMNESS	...	54
XVI.	MY THEISTIC FAITH	...	58
XVII.	THE BEAUTIFUL	...	62
XVIII.	THE GRACE OF GOD	...	68
XIX.	THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST	...	72
XX.	LOWLINESS	...	73
XXI.	LOYALTY AND CRITICISM	...	76
XXII.	THE USES OF PAIN	...	80

CONTENTS.

CHAP.		PAGE
XXIII.	LOVE AND FREEDOM ...	83
XXIV.	THE OBJECT OF EDUCATION ...	87
XXV.	THE CHOICE OF FRIENDS ...	90
XXVI.	SINCERITY OR <i>Sine Cera</i> , ...	92
XXVII.	DO SOMETHING ...	94
XXVIII.	IF YOU WANT TO BE LOVED ...	96
XXIX.	EVILS OF A BAD TEMPER ...	97
XXX.	HOW TO BECOME A STRICT MORAL MAN	98
XXXI.	DUTY FIRST, PLEASURE SECOND ...	100
XXXII.	HELP YOURSELF ...	101
XXXIII.	PUNCTUALITY ...	103
XXXIV.	DRINK, THE FIRST ONE AND THE LAST ONE	104
XXXV.	THE EVILS OF DRUNKENNESS ...	107
XXXVI.	SMOKING ...	109
XXXVII.	SELF ESTEEM ...	112
XXXVIII.	OUR DUTY TO GOD AND MAN ...	113
XXXIX.	HUMILITY ...	114
XL.	GOLDEN RULES ...	116

I.

THE YOGA OF CHRIST.

WRITTEN DOWN BY A. K. G.

MADRAS, 1894.

MY DEAR N——,

In these days of enlightenment and learning it is needless to repeat with the Rishis of old “God is one without a second.”

When Polytheism was not thought illogical, a protest from the thinking portion of society was necessary; but in a period in which no one soberly thinks of God as many, an attempt to prove that there is One God is superfluous; not so, however, if we try to establish the *Oneness of Man*.

It is a favourite doctrine of Theosophy that even in Polytheism there is a certain truth which leads us to some positive knowledge of God. When God is seen in different relations in regard to His different attributes, these attributes seem to assume separate existence as so many entities, and one God becomes many, according to the view in which He is seen.

At a period when all things are viewed analytically, this is inevitable. But when all these attributes are brought together, and are seen as inhering in the God, Polytheism gives place to Theism, and the saying, “One in thirty-three millions” seems no more a paradox. It is a fact greatly to be deplored, that even to this day no two men worship the same Deity. As many men, so many are their Gods, even though they profess to worship the same God. So long as men are not one in *Yoga*, there re-

mains the possibility of Polytheism, despite the professed Theism of the world.

Is it possible then, for all men to be one, forgetting their personality and their peculiar modes of thinking and feeling? I aver it is possible, although to many it may seem to be Utopian. In deep meditation when a *Yogi* forgets all things but God, he is in a position to attain to that state of *Yoga* which consists in becoming *One with Humanity*. So long as he is at enmity with a single individual, he cannot be one with God. His offended brother comes in his way, and he himself is kept at a distance from God. Buddha, being one with the Father, could say to his disciples, "I in you, you in me!" That which he said to his disciples, making them the representatives of Mankind in their different shades of character, must be realised in his life by him who is anxious to be in unity with God, before he can expect to make progress in *Yoga*. It is true that the *Yogis*¹ of old did not consciously become one with Humanity in their endeavour to attain unity with the object of their aspiration. But one thing they did which certainly fulfilled the condition of becoming united with their fellow beings. They studiously avoided all occasion of falling out with any creature, nay, they cultivated friendly relations with all, before they ever attempted to unite themselves with the Lord. Finally forsaking all that set them against any creature, they virtually became one with all, and hence the *Yoga* they attained was real and lasting.

It is a fact of human development, that before a thing becomes the object of consciousness, it is undefined; in the course of time only, it assumes a definite shape and form,

¹ *Yogi* = one who practises *Yoga*.

and then only can it fall under the observation of those who seek it in their life. The *Yogis* of former times, however unconscious of the fact, which in Christ became most definite, had in them what was the very condition of oneness with God. It is the Son of Man who has explained to the world what it is to be One with God and One with Man.

The great peculiarity of his Yoga lies in the distinction he makes between himself and the Father, even while he is one with Him, and in his perfect oneness with Humanity, including both the pure and the sinful. What is true of him and of the *Yogis* preceding his advent may satisfy our speculative interest, but something practical is still required which may help us in attaining to this wonderful *Yoga*. For this end we may accept as a doctrine that there is but *One Man* in relation to God, who is "*without a second!*" To express this doctrine in other words we may say that Divinity and Humanity are both "*one without a second.*"

No one can hear this paradox without feeling himself shocked, but the truth of the doctrine is incontrovertible. Our public worship is based on this doctrine. There can be no public worship among us without the whole congregation becoming one with the minister, and worshipping God as One Man. If we apply this principle more extensively, we see the Heaven and the Earth bound together in one indissoluble bond. The *Yogis* and the *Maharshis*, the Saints and the Prophets, the Devotees and the *Sadhus*,² whether of this world or of the other, form but one congregation in the worship of the Father and Mother. We are one with them when our hearts unite in singing glory unto the Lord.

¹ *Maharshis* = Maha, great ; rishi, adept—a Sanskrit term.

² *Sadhu* = a devotee.

Worship conducted in a right spirit, whether in private or in public, has in it the seed of this perfect Yoga. When it is fully developed it brings men face to face with God, as one man in relation to Heaven and Earth. In order to be one with Humanity and one with God, it is only necessary that we should always keep before our eyes the relation of the worshipper and the worshipped, scrupulously defined. The *Yogis* and the *Maharshis*, the Saints and the Prophets, the Devotees and the *Sadhus* are all only worshippers. Jesus and Moses, Chaitanya¹ and Sakyā,² Janaka³ and Yajnavalka,⁴

¹ *Chaitanya.* "This great religious preacher was regarded by his followers as an incarnation of Vishnu. That he was an adept of very high order, if not an Avatar, admits of no doubt.

"I have wondered how the occult lessons imparted by one of the greatest Masters of India have been so soon lost to the world, and how the movement inaugurated only three centuries and a half ago under the best auspices has seemingly lost all life. But it was not for the materialistic generations that followed him that Sri Chaitanya incarnated himself and worked. His hand will be visible till 10,000 years of Kaliyuga are completed, and we are now only on the verge of completing its first 5,000 years."—*Theosophist*, July, 1894.

² *Sakyā.* "The sacred books of Tibet constantly speak of Buddha as the *Sakya*. In them, Buddha is the heir-apparent to the throne of Sakyas. . . . The Tibetan sacred books preserve an account of the Sakyā creations; of the non-sexual procession of the ancient Sakyā Kings; and of the settlement of the Sakyas at Kapila, the birthplace of Buddha. Their chief seat was the Kingdom of Kōsala, near the southern base of the Himalayas. . . . They claim for Buddha a Kshatatriyan descent from the noble Ikshvaku, or the Solar Line."—(*Indian Empire*, Sir W. Hunter).

³ *Janaka*, the King of Videha, distinguished for his goodness, devotion, wisdom and sanctity. He was the "father" of Sita; while ploughing the ground and preparing it for sacrifice for the obtaining of offspring, Sita sprang fully formed out of the earth. The Brahmanas state that "he refused to submit to the hierarchical pretensions of the Brahmins, and asserted his right to perform sacrifice without the intervention of priests."

⁴ *Yajnavalka* or *Yajnavalkya*, an Indian sage of great renown, the expounder of the *Yoga* doctrines, and possessed of high powers. He is the reputed author of the White *Yajur-Veda*; he assisted King Janaka in his claims and contentions against the Brahmin priesthood. He was a religious reformer, and instructed his wife Maitreyi in spiritual wisdom.

nay all those whom the world has worshipped as *Avatars*¹ and Incarnations, are only worshippers, but worshippers of the highest type, and we as younger brothers and sisters of theirs are one with them. In no other relation do they deign to dwell in us but in this relation. Whether conscious or unconscious thereof, when you or I worship God, the whole galaxy of saints and prophets is united with us, united in a manner which makes us an invisible whole. In this state, it is needless to tell you, that there is One God, the worshipped, before us, and we, the worshippers, are as One Man. Theosophy delights in this great synthesis, and its end is to effect this on earth.

* * * *

Do not defend me—it will never do—you will only make yourself enemies.

Yours affectionately,

R.

¹ An Avatara is a divine incarnation—a particular Form or Power of the Deity, or of some divine being incarnated in the body of a simple mortal. It works under certain conditions and limitations which it has voluntarily assumed, for the good of Humanity.

II.

THE THREEFOLD YOGA.

MY DEAR N——,

I have never neglected to answer your questions whatever they might be, nor do I mean to do so now; still any head would be puzzled to reply to your last letter with precision. Anyway I must help you in your advancement.

Your last question I shall strive my utmost to explain to you as briefly and clearly as I can. The thing you want to know is about "The Threefold Yoga."

i. Through intellect, heart and soul we are united unto the Lord. It is the intellect which helps us in the *first* stage of our spiritual life. We are sceptically disposed before we mentally realise truths for ourselves. Current thoughts may influence us, but unless they are proved by us to be real they do not belong to us intellectually. The union with the Lord through intellect is effected when the Source of all Truth is directly perceived. Scepticism often darkens our intellect and hinders direct perception. A hard struggle goes on till the intellect throws off the thraldom of doubt and attains a clear vision of the True.

The *Arya Rishis* called this *Jnana Yoga*¹, in which the existence of all, and support of all, is all in all. At the

¹ *Jnana-Yoga* is that part of Yoga or the Science of the Soul which pertains to esoteric knowledge.

commencement of the *Jnana Yoga*, or of the *Bhakti Yoga*¹, the one thing needful is to clear our intellect from all sceptical limitations. We all know that God is omnipresent, but His omnipresence cannot be realised because of our mind being absorbed in the thoughts of this world, and limited by them. To purge our mind of these intruding thoughts and banish the clouds caused by passions and desires, is the arduous task that engrosses the attention of a *Yogi* in the first stage of *Yoga*. His whole attention is centred on this point, and his absorbing thought is to feel the Presence of the Lord, whom he has learnt to perceive as omnipresent. He is not expected to give his mind to thoughts about the other attributes which inhere in this Presence.

2. When he is firmly grounded in *Jnana Yoga* or the direct perception of the Lord through intellect, his mind glides into the contemplation of the relation which he himself bears unto Him. These relations, almost spontaneously apprehended, readily remind him of all the good that he has enjoyed in his life, especially in his hard struggle for victory over his passions and desires, and for the realisation of the Presence of the Lord, which now surrounds him on all sides.

With the realisation of the goodness of the Lord the heart is melted into fervent devotion, and the *Yogi* is transported into the region of joy and felicity. This *Yoga*, effected through the heart, is *Bhakti Yoga*. The *Yogi's* heart now pants after the Lord and nothing seems to him felicitous except His loving presence. He sees "His Face" and tears roll down his eyes for joy.

3. As this state of *Yoga* deepens, the *Yogi* throws his

¹ *Bhakti-Yoga* is the purely devotional side of *Yoga*.

very soul at the feet of God, and along with this the third stage of his life begins. Through intellect he has realised the Presence, and through heart he has felt the Goodness and Beauty of the Lord; but as yet the self, however attenuated and made less intrusive, has not wholly vanished. He cannot embrace the evils of life with as much alacrity as he does the good, nor consider them as alone flowing from the unbounded beneficence of God. But when self disappears altogether, then the Lord becomes all in all, the *Yogi* does not keep anything for himself. His whole life is in the hands of God, and He can then use it in any way He likes. This is happily entitled *Pranayoga*¹ because the devotee does not live and move by his own strength, but is made to live and move by the Lord Himself. The *Yoga* begun through intellect and heart becomes now perfect in this state. There was estrangement before the intellect realised the Presence, and there was no loving relation before the heart was occupied with the Goodness of the Lord, hence although the seeing and enjoying effected through heart and intellect must be considered and accepted as *Yoga*, yet it is only when there remains nothing in the soul to be called "mine," that the *Yoga* is complete.

It is not unknown to devotees, that these three stages of *Yoga* exhibit phases which make them one and the same, in as much as the *Jnanayogi* intellectually, the *Bhaktiyogi* in sentiment, and *Pranayogi*² with all his soul, enjoy oneness with the Lord. If it is the utterance of the *Pranayogi* that "I and my father are one," the same is found in a modified form in the utterances of the two

¹ *Prana-Yoga*. *Prana* is the breath of Life. *Prana-Yoga* is therefore the *Yoga* of Life itself.

² *Prana-Yogi*.=One who has attained to the practice of the above.

other *Yogis*. The threefold *Yoga*, therefore, in truth and in spirit, is one and the same, and in its perfection, the intellect, the heart and the soul become one with the Lord, and He reigns in the man in all the departments of his life. So long as one has not raised himself to such a state that he can without any effort love the Lord with all his mind, with all his heart, and with all his soul, he cannot be called a *Yogi* in the strictest sense of the term *Yoga*. The threefold *Yoga*, therefore, is outlined in the commandment which enjoins, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind."

This is what I had to say on "The Threefold *Yoga*."

Unfortunately this letter has been lengthened more than enough, for which I ask your pardon.

* * * *

Tusting this will find you in excellent health,

With all good wishes, believe me,

Ever affectionately yours,

R.

III.
 THE YOGA
 OF
 CHRIST AND OF KRISHNA
 COMPARED.

MY DEAR N——,

Comparison is invidious and sinful when it is made for the purpose of proving the inferiority of one leader of mankind to another.

I have not placed Christ and Krishna¹ side by side for the purpose of comparing the one with the other, but in order to enlighten you as to their peculiar modes of *Yoga*, which have both points of coincidence and of divergence. It is a vicious mode of conducting theological enquiries that leads men to think disparagingly of those systems which come from Masters other than the one whom alone they believe to be sent by God, or whom they regard as the Supreme Being incarnated.

It is a curious fact that even the enlightened who are otherwise liberal, are conservative as regards their theological beliefs. Their speeches and writings concerning other things are without any bias or prejudice, but when

¹ Krishna is the eighth Avatar of Vishnu, often considered as the complete and perfect manifestation on earth of that Deity. He possessed divine creative powers. He lived about 2000 B.C.

they speak or write on religion, they seem to be bound hand and foot. However we may regret this circumstance, it is refreshing to observe that in different parts of the world *the spirit of the age is fast developing a school which is trying to throw off the trammels of sectarianism and bigotry.* The time has past—and it shall never return—when men thought that the teachings of the *Bhagavat Gita*¹ were copied from parts of the Bible. Western learning has opened the eyes of many to *critically examine both the Bible and the Bhagavatgita, and to establish their independent origin.* Though there is coincidence, we observe along with it such difference as cannot fail to convince one that they were not the product of the same minds.

The spirit of *Yoga* that prevails in the Bible, and the spirit of *Yoga* that prevails in the *Bhagavatgita*, are at the same time alike and different. Hence the Bible may be said to be the fulfilment of the other. This fulfilment is of so revolutionary a character that the original coincidence almost disappears in the new development. What I have here noted will presently appear from the different sayings of Christ and Krishna. If we investigate the central idea of the *Yoga* of these two great souls, we meet with one which was prominent in them both.

Christ and Krishna were both conscious of their oneness with the Supreme Being, but their positions were not the same.

Christ said, "I and my Father are one."

Krishna said, "I am the Great Spirit, O Arjuna."²

¹ *Bhagavat Gita*, the song of the Lord, was composed by Krishna; it describes the struggle between the Pandus and Kurus, and gives the instruction of Arjuna by Krishna, and his final victory over his enemies.

² Arjuna was the son of Krita-virya; it is said of him, "No other king shall ever equal him in regard to sacrifice, liberality, austerities, courtesy, and self-restraint."

Here Krishna evidently *identifies* himself with God, while Christ, in declaring his oneness with the Father, never lost sight of his sonship.

He said to Philip, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; how sayest thou, show us the Father?" From this it seems as if Christ identified himself with God as Krishna does. But read what follows, and then say whether he meant identity or *oneness in Yoga*.

"Believest not thou that I am in the Father, and the Father in me?"

Krishna, although he declared his identity with God in the state of *Yoga*, never qualified his speech by such expressions as would imply the separation of his own consciousness from God-consciousness.

Thus admitting the fundamental difference of Christ's *Yoga* and Krishna's *Yoga*, we are constrained to observe that Krishna's identity with God was not absolute, but relative.

Christ said, "The words that I say unto you, I speak not from myself, but the Father abiding in me doeth his works." Here the Prince of Prophets gives us clearly *the clue by which we are to enter into the spirit of the ancient teachers of religion, who, acknowledging their humanity, identified themselves with the Supreme Spirit only at the time when they taught divine things*. Krishna made no secret of this distinction, when he said, "Na Sakyam tanmayavubastatha vaktumasheshatah. Paramhi brahma kathitam yogayuktena tanmaya." "I told you great revealed truths in the state of *Yoga*, now it is not in my power to say them again unto you in their fulness." Krishna was in the habit of holding daily communion with the Supreme Being, and performing rites and ceremonies in which he felt the presence of the Lord.

Christ said, "I in the Father and the Father in me,"

"Ye in me and I in you." Contrast this saying with that of Krishna, who said, "*Sarvabhatasthamatmanam sarva-bhutami chatmani ikshate yogayuktatma sarvatra samadarsanah. Yo mam pasyati sarvatra savancha mayi pasyati, tasyaham na pranasyami sacha me na pranasyati.*" "He who has attained *Yoga*, and looks on things with equal eye, beholds the Supreme Spirit in all, and all in the Supreme Spirit. He who sees me in all and all in me, from him will I not disappear, and from me will he not disappear." You will find that although in spirit these two sayings are almost identical, they are different in their practical application. Krishna brings prominently before the eyes of his disciples the Supreme Spirit as manifested in all creation, and pre-eminently in himself, never allowing us to think of anything else than this manifested Great Being.

Christ, on the contrary, keeps himself, along with the Father, before the vision of his disciples, that they, by contemplating the oneness of the Father and the Son, may at last be one with them both. Hence on the eve of his departure from this world, Christ prayed, "Neither for these (disciples) only do I pray, but for them also that believe in me through their word; that they all may be one, even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." I have said in the beginning that the modes of *Yoga* peculiar to Christ and Krishna have coincidences and divergences as well. So far as the *Yoga* with the Supreme Being is concerned, there is marvellous coincidence in the sayings of Christ and Krishna. Christ, it is true, kept his sonship always in view, but even in this state he was so far lost in the Deity that in words and deeds he identified himself with the Lord. Krishna did not present himself as the son, but along with his identity with the Divine Essence, he played the part

of a *Yogi* that holds communion with the Supreme Spirit day and night. Krishna united all things with God, *but never had as his mission the work of uniting men with men through one typical man*, in whom at the end all were made one with God. *Christ fulfilled what Krishna two thousand years before his advent began*, but in this work of fulfilment he raised humanity to be one with Divinity, instead of bringing down Divinity to identify itself with humanity.

IV.

THE FATHERHOOD AND MOTHERHOOD OF GOD.

MY DEAR N——,

I have just seen some friends of yours who paid me a visit yesterday, which in honour of them and of you I returned to-day.

I am glad to answer one of your queries. It is no idle talk that religion gives comfort to the disconsolate, sends peace into the hearts of the sorrowful, brings heaven on earth to bless those who consecrate their lives entirely unto its service. From the beginning of human existence, in whatever shape it has appeared, it has never failed to work out good to man at large. The truth is, that consolation comes to the soul from the Master, and religion, inasmuch as it brings her face to face with Him, ensures eternal happiness.

To live consciously in the embrace of the Father always, is not the common lot of humanity. Who does not know that He never leaves men unto themselves, Himself retiring into the deep recesses of eternity? Yet this knowledge does no good until it is realised in life. Spiritual men of every age have left all for this great privilege of living perpetually in the presence of the

Master. They succeeded in it after great struggles with their lower self. People who are attached to the things of this world, are not expected to leave all for this remote blessedness, which by nature scarcely intrudes upon their senses, or comes in immediate contact with their present interest. It needs a long training to raise humanity from the stage which it occupies in common with the lower animals, and to make it feel the superior power of the supersensible, in imparting that greatest happiness for which humanity secretly hungers and thirsts. Until this is done, there is no hope that the masses will tread in the paths of spiritual men, however greatly held in reverence by them.

The Son of Man, therefore, promised to his disciples to pray unto the Father to give them the Comforter, who would lead them to all truth, and grant them consolation under great trials and tribulations. To them also who would believe in His mission, by hearing the gospels preached unto them, He assured the same privilege, provided they kept His words and did the will of His Father.

These nineteen hundred years have witnessed changes in Christendom, have civilised many rude nations, have brought Rule and Government out of great Anarchy, and have taught men to be sober and thoughtful, pious and spiritual; but strange is it that among the followers of Christ, there are so few who talk of the Comforter whom He promised to send on behalf of the Father, and *did send* unto His immediate disciples. There is a certain sect which gives prominence to the Holy Spirit, but the generality of Christians have no faith in Him as working out their salvation or leading them to all truth. Why this disregard of the promise of One whom all of

them hold in such great reverence? The promise was not surely an empty one. It was made to those who would become the children of God. Do they not know that none is entitled to be called the child of God, unless he is begotten of the Holy Spirit?¹ If they are attached to the Son of God and desire Him to abide in them, they cannot, they are aware, do away with the Spirit of Truth, without whom the promise of the Son of Man, that He would come with the Father and make His abode with His followers, remains unfulfilled.

In spite of all these acknowledged facts, the promise lay almost in-operative till the advent of Theosophy, which teaches that God the Comforter is all in all. The glory of the Son so dazzled the sight of the Christian world that they could never gaze upon the Father, nor understand distinctly the working of the Spirit within them. It was, therefore, necessary that men who began their spiritual life with the adoration of the Father, should be discouraged from worshipping One, other than the Author of their being. This worship of the Father, the supreme Brahma, would have never proceeded further had it not been the purpose of the Lord to bring out of it what He promised unto mankind through His beloved Son. The hearts of men being exclusively set on the Son, gave birth to doctrines which seemed to alienate men from the Father, whom they described as demanding satisfaction for the sins committed by the individual, as well as by the race, through one man's disobedience. He cannot be appeased, they think, by repentance, though

¹ This refers to the second birth. It is known by name to the Indian people as *Dwija* or twice born; the Brahmins and some Kshattriyas claim the monopoly.

it was frequently alluded to by the Son of Man Himself, as all-sufficient for ensuring God's grace.

When the Father was thus made unapproachable, there was no other alternative but to fall back upon the Son, and if the Son seemed to share the inexorableness of the Father on certain points, then upon Mary, in whom sympathy for the weak and the fallen was by her mother nature, unbounded.

Whether men worship the Son, or the beautiful idea of the Madonna, the effect is the same, inasmuch as it sends away the Lord of All into the depths of eternity, there to be shrouded in His own glory and never allows anyone to unveil Him or to look upon His face. If the Divinity manifested in the Son and in the Mother, consoles the disconsolate, and emboldens the sinner to shake off the bonds of sin, it is absurd to think, that in God Himself such consolation and reassurance are wanting. A bad logic separated justice from mercy, and made God perfect by halves, the one residing in Himself, and the other in His beloved Son. If the Spirit of God dwelling in the Son, filled Him with unbounded love, it is vain to think that God Himself is wanting in compassion for the sinner, who, they say, has no right to approach Him but through the Son. It was the same Spirit of God that dwelt in the Son, it is the same Spirit that dwells in us for our sanctification. The identity of God and His Spirit and the possibility of sonship through the Spirit, none dare deny, and yet to make the Son all in all, throwing God and His Spirit in the shade, was a palpable error, which deluged the earth with pagan worship. Peace, comfort and joy, which religion bestows upon men, are the fruits of the Spirit, and whoever receiving them from Him, attributes them to the Son, never acknowledging the real

source, does sin against the Spirit, however unconscious he may remain of the fact in the present state of his ignorance. Let men come to know God the Comforter, by *direct vision and by hearing His Voice*, and all ignorance, superstition and baseless fear will pass away, giving place to a firm faith in the Fatherhood and the Motherhood of God.

V.

THREEFOLD OBEDIENCE.

MY DEAR N——,

Yesternight when going to bed I thought I would write to you something on your question, "Threefold Obedience." In great haste I write to you now.

As the man emerges from his infantine state, his consciousness of a Power, overruling his destiny, becomes more and more clear to his mind. Thus the Vedic Rishis,¹ when they composed hymns, were certainly not in a rude state. Thousands of years must have elapsed before they could conceive thoughts which to this day evoke admiration. We cannot positively assert what were the stages through which long generations passed before the commencement of the Vedic period, but of this we are sure, that the primitive man possessed a germ of thought which developed into a system and which must, in spirit, endure under various modifications.

Philosophers may differ in opinion as to the particular conception that took hold of man, even when he was not given to systematic methods of thought, but they cannot avoid the conclusion that the result which we now perceive must have had a beginning commensurate with its evolution. Man being conscious of his own agency in bringing about temporary changes even in the bare pursuit of his subsistence, cannot remain long blind to the Agency that

¹ The Rishis or Adepts described in the *Veda*.

works out daily various changes around him. The conception of a Power, therefore, that overrules all natural phenomena, attracted the notice of the primitive man, and, as his mind developed, gave rise to hymns in praise of It impersonated.

"Evidently the (Vedic) Rishi, in recognising personal Force, argued not personality from blind force. His was no inferential theology. *His Storm-god¹ and his Fire-god² were at once causal forces, and also intelligent beings and loving persons.* As the clouds thundered and discharged electricity and poured down rains, he wondered, bowed and prayed; he spoke to one he knew not, but recognised as a Father and a Friend, a person who knew him, and was ready to protect and deliver him."

Deliver him from what?

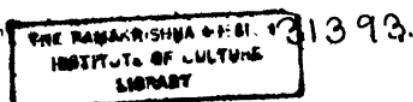
"From the trials and temptations of this world, from sins and from iniquity."

"In all departments of Nature he saw a Person, who was infinite in Power and Intelligence and Compassion. It was a besetting force, an all-seeing witness, an ever-present father, a most loving mother, and a holy Saviour who delivered men from sin."

i. Deliverance from sin presupposes perfect obedience to the Power, whose will the devotee must do, in order to be set free from the bonds of sin. Religion binds man to God, and reconciles him to his Creator. Take away obedience from it, and there remains nothing worth being called religion. When the days of the spontaneous growth of religious ideas passed away, men came to a

¹ The Storm Gods are called Maruts, they are the children of Siva.

² The Fire God is Agni, the oldest and most revered of the Gods in India.



period in which reflection played a prominent part. The Power, infinite in intelligence, at once occupied the mind of the devotee, and by reflection, he could recognise as coming directly from Him, the wisdom that flowed in him.

Intelligence is involved in activity, inasmuch as the work produced by it bears testimony to its pre-existence. Never did man worship a blind force, nor did he supplicate blessings from it. The Human mind revolts against thinking of a Power which engenders intelligence in him, and is yet devoid of intelligence itself.

2. To bow down before the light received from the Source of all Light is the second mode of obedience, for which the Rishis of the Vedantic period were most famous. The seers of the Jewish nation submitted themselves to the Inner Voice, never disbelieving nor setting it aside in the daily practice of their life.

Jesus said, "The words which thou gavest me I have given unto them."

"The things which I heard from Him, these speak I unto the world."

"As the Father taught me, I speak these things."

"I speak the things which I have seen with my Father."

He exhibited unto the world by these utterances his profound reliance on the voice of God, and taught the believers to have implicit faith in the words of the Spirit of God as revealed within. Those who keep these words are promised life eternal.

3. What else is the keeping of these words than perfect obedience to the wisdom of the Lord. One that obeys God in deeds as in words, following His dictates as revealed in nature and in spirit, comes to the third stage of development, which is intimately related to the affection of man

and the love of God. The love of the Lord takes possession of our heart, when we desire nothing else than the fulfilment of His will, and walk by no other light than what He vouchsafes unto us. In this stage we are a law unto ourselves. We cannot bear to do anything which in the least offends Him. Our obedience is now perfectly spontaneous. Formerly we obeyed Him at great sacrifice, now it is a delight to pass through many troubles for Him. The smile of His benign face sets all things right, and the devotee desires nothing else in this world than that.

Thus we see that by the working of the obedience of man in relation to the three attributes of God, *viz.*, Power, Wisdom, and Love, a spiritual height is attained wherein heaven meets the earth; the man is blessed with a perennial flow of Power, Wisdom, and Love from the Lord within, slaking his spiritual thirst as it grows with the enjoyment of heavenly bliss.

* * * *

R.

VI.

“WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST?”

MY DEAR N———,

During the last nineteen hundred years the question “What think ye of Christ?” has been answered by men in various ways. Some considered him as the very God of the Universe, while others thought that he was a mere man. Whosoever has impartially studied the words of Christ must have seen that both these opinions are erroneous, and both have been condemned by the Son of God himself.

Is Christ God?

No.

To say that the Son of God is God is to say that the Son is the Father, which is believed to be a heresy even by the Christians. Had Christ been the very God as He is now declared to be, then he would have distinctly and unequivocally declared, “I am God.”

It is a significant fact, as has been observed by a Christian theologian, that in the Christian scriptures Christ is called “man” not less than forty times.

Sixty-eight times God is styled the “Father of Jesus Christ.”

About twenty-eight times God is called the “God of Jesus Christ.”

Nineteen times Christ is called a “prophet.”

Upwards of eighty times he is called the "Son of man." Fifty-six times he is spoken of as the "sent of God." He is called the "Son of God" about one hundred and twenty times.

In nineteen passages it is declared that all praise and prayers are to be offered up to God.

Four hundred and fifty times peculiar epithets are applied to God, none of which are applied to Christ.

Thirteen hundred passages show that God is a Being distinct from Jesus Christ.

The doctrine that Jesus Christ is God, is not only without sufficient proof, but opposed by the most ample and clear testimony of the Holy Scriptures. We find that Jesus, while he was on this earth, was most anxious that people should know who he was, yea, the very success of his mission depended upon this knowledge among the children of men, and he asked the question with the greatest solicitude on many occasions. We do not find that in a single instance Christ was acknowledged as God. Against all these emphatic declarations that Christ is not God, there are a very few passages such as "I and my Father are one," and the like, which are adduced as indirect proof that he is God. These passages are of such ambiguous meaning that they entirely fail to prove the identity of Christ with God. We Easterns discover a beautiful meaning in them, without discerning that they were ever meant in the early Church to signify that he was God. Christ was not called God. The Apostles' Creed, which is considered the oldest Creed in Christendom, does not embody such a doctrine. It is strange then that the belief that Christ is God became prevalent among a large number of Christians.

The most remarkable reference is in the sixteenth chapter of the Gospel of Matthew, which runs:— “When Jesus came into the coasts of Cæsarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? and they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets. He said unto them, But whom say ye that I am?”

The following is the reply to this most important question. “And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

With this reply Christ was very much pleased. He exclaimed, “Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in Heaven.”

We believe that whosover confesses, like Peter, that Christ is the Son of God and not the very God, is accepted by Christ. He has the Apostolic Faith of Peter. Why then do our Christian friends insist upon the acceptance of the doctrine that Christ is God, as the only condition of a man being reckoned as a believer in Christ? Is not such a doctrine the invention of man? We believe that Christ is the Son of God. By this we do not again mean to say that he was a mere man, nor merely one of the greatest of human Teachers. Such a supposition we consider to be extremely injurious and erroneous. It is the

Creed of the rationalists, sceptics and men who are very far from the kingdom of God. This wretched doctrine carries its own condemnation with it.

Yes, we believe that Christ is divine. He is the divine Son. He is not God but he is Son of God. His divinity is not the divinity of the Father but the divinity of the Son. The Son's divinity is not absolute but relative. He is divine not only because the Father made him divine, but his divinity proceeds from the Father and dwells in him. His position is subordinate and inferior to that of the Father. The early Fathers very appropriately compared the Father to the sun, and the Son to the light which emanated from it. Christ's existence was relative, dependent, and subordinate to the Father. He was the model Humanity, the model Son. He was the light which "proceeding from the Father lighteneth every man." He was the way by which man should walk up to heaven. He was salvation and heaven itself. His function was essentially different from that of the Father.

It is extremely absurd and meaningless to pray unto the Son.

Prayer should only be made to the supreme God, the Father of Christ and the Father of all.

It is a recognized fact that Christ himself prayed unto the Father, taught us all to pray unto Him only, as he did; not in a single instance did he give us to understand that we should pray unto the Son, yet numberless Christians pray unto the Son as unto the Father. With them the Father and the Son are numerically one. Such systematic prayer unto the Son means the denial of his function and mission. I think it is a blasphemy to deny the divinity of the Son, but the

office and the function of the divine Son should always be distinguished from those of the Divine Father. The Son came not to be prayed to, but to teach us to pray, to show us the Father and to become our way and light in the path of salvation. We should "put on" Christ, as it has been beautifully said ; whereas the function and the office of the Father is to receive our prayer through the spirit of the Son, and save us through the influence of his life and death.

This is, N———, what I have to say on the point. Tell me, how do you like it ?

Yours affectionately,

R.

VII.

FAITH.

My DEAR N——,

You are right in your conception of Faith, *viz.*, that it is something transcending science. Science is concerned with the knowable and finite, and science can be exact. But the object of Faith is unknowable, except so far as He has been pleased to reveal Himself to men, for He Himself is Good, Infinite and Eternal.

Does not this reflection upon the nature of this great object of Faith, somewhat clear up your difficulty?

"I can't get faith," is a complaint I hear.

I reply, "My dear friend, that is very true. Faith is beyond you, you can't *take* it, but you can *receive* it. God alone can give it. This shows that a man's religion must begin, continue, and be consummated—in *humility*. Isn't it humiliating to have to confess, 'I can't even believe in myself. Open Thou mine eyes, that I may see the wondrous things of Thy Law! Help Thou mine unbelief!' "

And then isn't it a comfort in the midst of doubt and scepticism, when we ask, "*What is true?*" to realise that *GOD IS True, The Eternal I.*

We must all believe in this at least—an overshadowing, firm Rock in the midst of the fleeting ages.

It was a presumption upon the Divine condescension for ¹Keshub Babu to say, "I and my Father are One." For

¹ Keshub Chunder Sen, a distinguished leader of the Brahmos.

although our Father of His goodness is continually drawing us to Himself, yet we can never be *One Thing*, or *One Essence* (that is the exact meaning of the Greek word *éν*) with Him, though we can be united with Him.

After all, what you and I and everybody need, is simplicity. People ask for Faith, as if they could by means of it understand GOD like a book. This we cannot, because He is infinite and we are very small and finite. We cannot "comprehend" Him.

A religion to be satisfactory must be mysterious, for then progress and continual advance in Faith is possible. Faith understands what it has been told, accepts it and simply leaves the rest, the Beyond, in the Father's Will. Now we see by its means "through a glass" darkly. Hereafter we shall see Him as He is, and then "Faith will be lost in sight." Meantime, if ours is to be a true Faith, it must be "a Faith which worketh by love," e.g., if one has Faith in a common Father, one loves all men as brothers in Him!

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Is not this what you wanted to know?

Yours affectionately,

R.

VIII.

THE HUMANITY IN GOD.

MY DEAR N—,

We are familiar with the expression Divinity in Man ; this expression is very common among religious men of all ages and countries, but the expression Humanity in God, superficially viewed, will perhaps be considered by many as blasphemous : on closer examination, however, it will be found to be full of deep meaning.

When we say there is Humanity in God, do we mean that the sin and the sorrow, the shortcoming and the imperfection generally associated with Humanity, are present in the God-head ?

By no means. Such a supposition, we maintain, is not only untrue but extremely blasphemous. To ascribe to God in any way, the limitations, the imperfections or the shortcoming of humanity is the height of folly and sin. By Humanity we mean not only the sum total, but also the ideal perfection of those virtues that are present, in some measure or other, in every man and woman, on account of which he or she is justly called the child of God.

Let us at the very outset examine the question, What is meant by Humanity ? Though unfortunately in man's present degraded condition, Humanity is generally associated with evil, yet it may be asked, does evil actually form part and parcel of the substance of man's nature ? Far from it : such a supposition would mean that from Him

who is the Fountain of all Good, has proceeded evil: a supposition that is simply impious. The fact is, that the essence of human existence or Humanity, as it is called, when it proceeded from its Author, was pure and without alloy. The sin and the sorrow and the other evils with which it is so much associated here below, *are foreign to it*, they are accidental, being merely connected with it in its onward journey through this world. The origin and the ultimate destiny of Humanity are, therefore, sacred and divine. Are we not told that "every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning"? Humanity, the very crown of all the gifts with which Man has been endowed, is not only the gift of God, but has proceeded from the Substance o God. For as light and heat flow from the sun, al manner of Goodness, Truth, Beauty and Virtue proceed from God, the primeval source of them all. We are told that when man was created, he was made after the image of God, or in other words, when Humanity was formed, it was formed out of a Substance which already dwelt in God. What can this Substance be, unless it be the perfect type of Humanity which was present in Divine nature from Eternity. Jesus also taught us to be "perfect even as our Father in heaven is perfect." How can the Son be like the Father unless there be some similarity in their natures? What man is there who thinks that his cow or his buffalo is like his dog or cat? But everyone wishes that his domestic animals should represent the best and the perfect type of the species to which they belong.

In God, therefore, is the highest ideal, the very perfection of Humanity.

-There is a class of thinkers who imagine that God is an abstract Being who is confined within the sphere of His transcendent existence and has nothing in common with man's being ; and man is considered as a congeries of delusion, misery and *Maya*.¹ This God therefore cannot sympathise with the manifold weaknesses, wants and struggles of Humanity, and is deaf to its groaning and bitter entreaties. They think it contamination to impute to God anything that is possessed by man. Such a supposition they consider highly derogatory to the dignity of God.

Let deluded theologians indulge in such vagaries and fanciful speculations,—the soul of man wants a Being who is kind and forgiving as a father, tender as a mother, affectionate as a brother or a sister, faithful as a wife, dutiful as a son, and just and merciful as a king—one who is adorned with all the virtues of Humanity. The heart of man yearns after a God who possesses these virtues in their *infinite* perfection. For the earthly mother may forsake the child of her bowels, and the father may turn against his son ; man's best friend may oftentimes betray him, and his partner for life may become faithless to him ; the king may be unjust, and the son may desert his parents ; whereas heaven and earth may pass away, but the manifold virtues and the love of our Lord shall in nowise fail. In God, therefore, dwells the highest type of Humanity in its infinite perfection.

It is commonly known as “ Divine Humanity.”

The clearest and most decisive evidence as to the Humanity of God is in the fact of the incarnation of the Son of God.

The question “ What is Christ ? ” is best answered by

¹ *Maya* is Illusion, the phenomenal world of manifestation.

the statement that Christ is the incarnation not of the entire Godhead, but of *the divine Humanity*, if we may so express ourselves, which lived and dwelt in the Substance of God from all eternity. To say that Christ is the incarnation of the entire Substance of God is to deny the uniqueness of the doctrine of incarnation¹ of the Son and to identify him with the Father. The object of the dispensation pertaining to the life and death of Christ is to remodel and fashion all human souls after the pattern of the Divine Humanity out of His own Substance, which proceeded from the Father and was revealed in Jesus Christ. Believing, as we do, that it is blasphemy to identify the Father with the Son or to call the Son of God God, we cannot but maintain that the highest evidence of the Humanity in God, as we call it, is in that most wonderful phenomenon of the spiritual world, *viz.*, the incarnation of the Son of God. For whence came forth the Son, the incarnation of Divine humanity, unless it be that he was in the Father and with the Father from all eternity?

Yours affectionately,

R.

¹ This phrase is ambiguous, but I do not like to alter it. It probably means, "to deny the separate personality of the Son."

IX.

THE HOLY SPIRIT.

MY DEAR N——,

It is a significant fact that men began their religious life with a belief in the Spirit of God. This Spirit of God was not something foreign to them, it dwelt within them and influenced their life for good.

So far back as the time of the Vedic Rishis, we hear the *Rik¹ Veda* teach that there dwell in man two spirits, one, the Individual, and the other, the Universal Soul. If modern scientists endeavour to prove that religion began with the worship of the Holy Ghost, we are not at all startled at their assertion, for we remember that the first consciousness of the Divine Spirit must be felt within approving or disapproving certain acts performed by the individual.

We hear of the chiefs of the Tonga Islands who, on being asked what motives they had for conducting themselves with propriety, besides the fear of misfortune in this life, replied,—“The agreeable and happy feeling which a man experiences within himself when he does any good action or conducts himself nobly and generously as a man ought to do”; they answered as if they wondered such a question should be asked at all.

The familiar story of the savage who came and re-

¹ There are four Vedas, the Rik, the Yajur, the Sama, and the Atharva.

turned the piece of silver inadvertently given to him, only because he could not sleep the whole night for the quarrel that ensued within his heart between the Good Man and the Bad Man, shows the presence of the Spirit of God, whom the savage ignorantly called "the Good Man." Moreover, these ignorant people saw this Spirit dwelling everywhere, and invoked Him when they had occasion to call for His help.

The Vedas, the Vedantas, and the Puranas magnify this Spirit, and declare Him as pervading the whole universe. The Bible has not forgotten to mention the Spirit of the Veda, when, beginning with the act of creation it says: "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." The Old and the New Testament both sing the glory of the Spirit of God, not as a distinct person, but as Power, Understanding, Word, Hand, Finger, and Breath of God, or in other words, the very God thus manifested.

I quote a few texts which show in what relation we stand to the Spirit of God.

"Thou gavest also thy good spirit to instruct them." (Neh. ix. 20.)

"By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens." (Job xxvi. 13.)

"The Spirit of God hath made me." (Job xxxiii. 4.)

"Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy holy spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit." (Psalm li. 11-12.)

"Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?" (Ps. cxxxix. 7.)

"And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the

spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord." (Isa. xi. 2.)

"I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions." (Joel ii. 28.)

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised." (Luke iv. 18.)

When we are told that the Spirit of God made the heavens and made man after His image, we feel that we are breathing the national Spirit of the Aryans to whom the Spirit was all in all.

"God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power," so did He anoint all His children that were appointed by Him to carry out His special work.

How can the sinner break the fetters of sin and iniquity? It is through the sanctification that belongs to the Holy Spirit alone.

"The Father manifests Himself in creation and then in His beloved Son, Jesus; but in neither of these manifestations does He save sinners. It is when He works within us as the Holy Spirit, quickening and inspiring our dead souls that we are converted and become altogether new creatures. Was not Christ himself baptised by the Holy Spirit? The dove was not born in him, but came down from above. If then we are to be baptised into new life, our baptism must come to us not from Christ, but from the Holy Ghost.

To the Holy Spirit belongs the glory of begetting and baptising the Son of God, as scriptural history testifies; and to It and It alone belongs the power of converting all mankind into sons of God."

This sanctification through the Spirit of God is familiar to the Indian devotees, who depend upon God alone for their salvation.

*Samkirtyamano bhagavanantah sru tan abhavo vyasanam
hipumsam praavisya chittam vidhunotyasesham yatha tamorko'
bhramativativatah.*

"When the glory of the eternal Lord is heard and sung, He enters into the heart of man, and removes all pangs completely; as does the sun in dispelling darkness, and the strong wind in scattering the clouds."

That the Spirit of God enters into man, and enables him to utter truth with power, everyone must admit to be the favourite theme of song both of the Vedic bards and the Puranic poets. It is the Spirit that makes men free, and makes them a law unto themselves. How beautifully this spiritual fact has been recorded in the following text of the Srimadbhagavata!

*Yada yasyanugrihnati bhagavanatmabhavita. Sa jahati matim
loke vedecha parinishthitam.*

"He who sets his mind on the Lord has His grace and abandons his devotion to the law and to custom."

This abandonment is not from carelessness, but as a result of being entirely taken up with the thought of the Lord. In this state the Indian devotees are oblivious of all other things but God.

*Kshanipatitvamathavaikamakinchanattvan nityam dadasi
bahumanamqtha pamanam vaikuntha vasumathana mathava
narake nivasam ha vasudeva mama nasti gatistadanya.*

“Whether thou dispensest me kingship or sendest me away as a man possessing nothing, whether Thou bedeckest me with honour or subjectest me to dishonour, whether Thou allottest *Vaikuntha*¹ for my habitation, or choosest Hell for my dwelling, O Thou all pervading Spirit ! I have no salvation besides Thee.”

In conclusion I may say, every impulse after holiness, every aspiration after goodness and perfection, every devotion of our souls to things unseen and eternal, every self-sacrifice for the sake of justice or of mercy, every hope that strengthens us amidst the darkness of trials and temptations and fills our hearts with trust, every dictate of duty that prompts us to forget our selfish ends, and devote our life to the good of others, is the working of the Spirit of God.

In Theosophy we are bound to magnify Him in our lives and show unto men the fruits that result from His holy influence. Let us prove to the world that “this Church of Theosophy is altogether an institution of the Holy Spirit. Its morality is the command of the Spirit, its prayer is a direct address to the Spirit, its heaven is a tranquil abiding in the Spirit, its wisdom is the inspiration of the Spirit, its church is brotherhood in the Spirit, its apostles are ordained of the Spirit.”

In this is the glory of the Lord and the glory of His children.

Yours affectionately,

R.

Vaikuntha, the Paradise of Vishnu, or the Heavenly Paradise.

X.

ENTHUSIASM OF HUMANITY.

MY DEAR N——,

I received a letter from you some time ago. I have been too much employed latterly to write, and now cannot write as fully as I should like.

It is a fact always to be borne in mind that a true principle should be so wide in its application as never to contradict any collateral principle to which it may, with propriety, be related.

Any one truth must be so related to all other truths that the one may not prove the other to be false.

Psychology begins and ends with the 'soul, *ego*¹ or self.² Take away self³ from it, it forthwith disappears. Theology is known to be a deadly enemy to self. It cannot bear its obtrusion and ever tries to set it at naught that the Lord may be all in all.

The zeal of the psychologists and the theologians, evoked under a false impression, has done infinite harm in the domain of science and philosophy. Psychology

¹ Meaning the person *Ego*.

² The lower elemental self is here meant, the Kama-manasic soul, which includes the brain mind. True *Theology* is a deadly enemy of this lower self.

³ Take away, or annihilate the lower self, and Psychology will disappear, for it will have nothing nothing to work upon.

has pushed the subjective side to the extreme, and reduced all reality to one thinking subject, while theology, dissatisfied with this false conclusion, has run to the other extreme, and shown with great force of reasoning that there is but one Substance which is God, and that the self or no self is but an illusion.

When a *Yogi* says, "It is not I that work or speak, it is God that works or speaks," the theologians delight in this saying, and forthwith proclaim that the work of illusion has ceased, and that the one Substance, which is God Himself, has shown Himself forth unto erring Humanity. We need not be ashamed of the fact that with the growth of spirituality in us, the self retires and the Lord fills up the vacant room. Before our spiritual sight was opened, the Lord screened Himself behind the self, but now the self retires into the background, and the Lord comes forward, screening it by His dazzling effulgence. At this stage the *Yogi* sees nothing else than the Presence of the Lord, and in acts and speeches does not feel the alloy of self. This is not that direful pantheism which as a speculative theory exerted fatal influence upon some minds in the past, but it is a real state of the soul when raised to the higher altitude of spirituality.

Unless a man attains to this stage, he cannot utter truthfully the words, "Lord, not mine but Thy will be done."

He from whom came first this utterance, gave expression to the attitude of his inner self, which self lay hidden in the Lord never to rise again, nor to feel that it was he that did act or speak. Here the psychologist might raise an objection that in no time of our existence is it possible to shake off the consciousness of self, and the activity it exerts in realising its inner changes, and that though the

'surrender of self may be a temporary feeling, it can never be an abiding principle of life.

This objection is met in the very utterance which shows that in the life of a *Yogi* there comes now and then a time of trial, when his subjective repose is broken, and he is tempted to come out of the wide embrace of the Lord and roam in the region of self.

Then the struggling *Yogi* again retires to the chamber of repose, uttering the significant words, "Not mine, but Thine." Had there been a total *extinction* of self, no trial would have caused the self to revive, and to struggle to keep that happy state into which it had entered after quenching all refractory desires. If it be contended that the eternal progress of the soul becomes an impossibility, if she ceases from all activity, and reposes ever quietly in the bosom of the Father, it should be borne in mind that the presence itself of the ever-active Power in the soul sends into her an activity which never fails, but increases as it proceeds, and becomes one with her being. There is repose in her in so far as she has ceased from all *désires* of her own, but she, now being no more her own self, has given herself up to the Lord, who in turn has taken her up entirely, filling her with an activity of His own. Thus to be passive in order to be led by the will of God, is not by any means unfavourable to the well-being of the soul ; it is truly the condition under which she thrives and becomes divine. If she leaves things of this world, however courted by the worldly-minded, she gains things of heaven which serve her eternal interest. Total submission to the will of God, with an utterance, "Thy will be done," is therefore the highest principle of life, and never contradicts the principle which the psychologist may urge in the interest of

the self. What was earthly and perishable in it has ceased like the dross of gold, and a tranquillity has come upon it, with an unceasing activity which is commonly known by the name of "ENTHUSIASM OF HUMANITY."

Such a transformation is not possible to a man until his will merges into the Universal Will, and the principle of his life becomes "not mine but Thy will be done."

Love and respects to all.

Yours affectionately,

R.

XI.

MUTUAL OBEDIENCE.

MY DEAR N——,

Everybody knows that virtue consists in obeying God, but that there is any virtue in obeying man, very few persons will readily admit. At the present time, when freedom of thought and freedom of action are considered the very ideal of human perfection, it is not to be wondered at that restriction of any kind in human thought or action should be considered as a great evil. Men, even religious men, fear obedience to man even as a child dreads to be in a dark room. But to the really pious and godly, obedience to man is not only the fulfilment and perfection of the virtue of obedience to God, but the former is the very condition and expression of the latter. We find that among the pious Roman Catholics and other persons who have entered deep into the mysteries of the spiritual world, the vow of obedience to man is considered essential to religious life. Apart from religion, no community, no organisation can be formed, no organised work can be done without the virtue of obedience.

If the crew did not obey the captain, navigation would be impossible. If no son obeyed his father or mother, if no wife, husband or daughter conformed to the will of the husband, wife or parents, there could be no home in existence. All members of society obey one another, else society would not have been formed. The virtue of mutual obedience is the very soul of social and domestic

organisation. Is it then only in the sphere of religion that obedience to men should be deemed unnecessary or unessential?

No. Whatever may be the teachings of Rationalism, Deism or Protestantism, every godly and devout man thinks that obedience, whether exercised in regard to man or God, is one and the same virtue. Some persons think that it is only the will of God which is absolutely holy, and in the obedience to that will is man's holiness, peace and salvation, but that this cannot be said of obedience to human will, which is unholy, and of the earth, earthly; such an obedience, they say, is another name for slavery and a sure path to hell.

Those that hold such an opinion know not what the nature of God is, and what His will fully signifies.

God is not a Being who sits on His throne in the seventh heaven, withdrawing Himself from the nether world.

He is present everywhere. Be it in the material or the spiritual world, the whole Universe is full of God who is omnipresent, and wherever He is, there His will is also present. It is only man who now and then rebels against His will. But even man, in spite of his temporary disobedience, in his better moments and in his higher state of existence is an index to the divine will. In a religious community formed according to the will of God and every member of which represents a purpose of God, the will of God is most clearly manifested in man.

We know the doctrine of incarnation. I do not believe that the very God of the Universe can ever be lodged or incarnated in man, but this I believe to be a sequence of my faith in God, that in a society like the one I describe above, every man and every woman is at least an incarna-

tion of the purpose or will of God, so that not only is it true that he that seeth in faith any particular person connected with that body, seeth the God who sent him, but he that obeyeth him, obeyeth the very Lord whose will and purpose he represents.

When a man acquires such faith, obedience to man is another name of obedience to God. He is saved not only by obeying God whom he sees not, but by obeying his brothers whom he sees.

Yours affectionately,

R.

XII.

WOMAN AND MAN.

MY DEAR N——,

There are some serious mistakes which we Indians invariably make in our idea of the diversity between man and woman. The relation of man and woman—their mutual bearing in life—the proper position which each should occupy in society—these are problems deep and difficult, and I suspect, have not been solved as yet.

That they are the two halves of a unit which comprises humanity full and complete, we can apprehend to a certain extent, but how to add them together and prove the result to be exactly *One*, not less, not more, is what passes our comprehension. Providence proposes to do it in due course of time. Let us watch and wait and take care that we do not obstruct the course of Providence, but rather throw ourselves entirely into the current. The human means and measures hitherto pursued have been mostly defective, and have served more to fetter than to further the cause of spiritual union. The free carnal comingling of the sexes, as it obtains in the West, has been productive of no very beneficial results in respect of the spirit; while the East, in an excessive anxiety to avoid the evils of carnal contact, has thrown woman down to a deplorable depth of degradation. Between the East and West a middle course must be discovered for the attainment of the object in view. The danger of constant conti-

guity of the higher nature and the flesh we cannot ignore ; yet constituted as we are, in the mysterious connection of body and soul, we do not see how the growth of the spirit apart from the body can be attained.

We seem to find a clue to the solution of this problem in that highly spiritual Epic of *Valmiki*¹—the *Ramayana Lakshman*,² the second hero of that poem, is held up as a model vanquisher of the passion of lust, he having abstained from seeing woman's face continually for fourteen years, though he was in close companionship with his brother's wife, during that long period of their sojourn in the wilderness.

Here is an instance of a type of chastity which remarkably indicates a union of the Oriental with the Occidental type. To be in company with a woman all day long and perhaps all night, without ever seeing her once during long long years,—this is indeed a happy harmony of the two opposite ways of the West and the East.

It inculcates a wholesome lesson worthy of all attention at the initial stage of spiritual culture. *That is the regulation and proper use of the eye-sight. The closing of the outer eye helps the opening of the inner eye.* The Neophyte begins with eyes shut, and when he opens them, heavy with the weight and light of the Spirit, he sees with a downcast look ; he dares not, he cannot look things in the face.

Woman's face, the holiest and the best of things on

¹ *Valmiki*, the author of the *Ramayana*, the guardian of Sita in her exile in the forest, and the tender foster-father and wise instructor of her two children Kusa and Lava.

² *Lakshman*, the brother of Rama, who accompanied him and Sita, his wife, in their exile in the forest, and assisted Rama in the rescue of Sita when she was carried off to Lonka by the demon Ravana.

earth, even the image of God our Mother in Heaven,— who can properly see it with an unholy, untutored eye? A long education and hard discipline is needed to prepare the outward eye to view woman's face. Until that is accomplished it must be kept shut. And all the time that the outer eye so remains shut, and you, a Neophyte, walk blindfolded in the paths of life, what must the inner eye do?

It must seek within the dark chambers of the heart the All-holy Mother of the Universe, resolved not to open the outer eye until the inner eye has found Her there.

The World has sought the Father long enough. That one-sided seeking has been the source of much evil. God is our Father and Mother both, two in one, and should be so sought and found. Having seen, in the heart of your heart, both analytically and synthetically, the Father and the Mother of Creation, you are in a position to open your outer eyes, and cast them on Humanity. Then what a glorious scene will present itself to your view! The same Father and Mother whom you have seen within, now made flesh as it were, will be manifest in every pair, apparently two but really *One*.

Such an education and such a revelation can alone adjust the relation of man and woman, and give them their rightful position in society. A mere intellectual recognition of the rights of woman will not mend matters much.

To call woman "Mother," with an empty heart, is to take the name of God in vain.

The vast gulf that separates man from woman, no conventional or secular union can bridge over. Nothing short of the spiritual vision of God in man and in woman, at once can settle the question in all the various aspects it involves.

Shut your eyes if you would see God. Shut your eyes also if you would see God in yourself, in your sister, in your father, in your mother, in short in man and in woman. The association of men of uneducated vacant eyes with women is fraught with all the corruption that we see around. If you, a man, must mix in the society of women, impelled by the stern call of duty, you must manage to keep your eyes shut even as Lakshman did. He who was most constantly in company with *Sita*,¹ sometimes in sole charge of her, serving her more than did her husband, the noble and the good *Ramchandra*,² yet managed--amid the close association and constant service of life to keep himself from a view of her woman's face. This is certainly a grand conquest of the spirit over the flesh. Yes, shut your eyes completely at first, then shut your eyes even when you seem to open them, and lastly with a half-closed eye and down-cast look, learn to look at the feet of women. This is the first step towards the adjustment of the relation and consummation of the union of man and woman.

Yours affectionately,

R.

¹ *Sita*, "born from a furrow of the earth."

² *Rama*, the hero of the *Ramayana*, and said to be a perfect incarnation of Vishnu, as Sita was an incarnation of Lakshmi.

XIII.

PARALLELISM OF THE SEXES.

MY DEAR N——,

You will, perhaps, remember that I have told you many times that there is a striking parallel between the sexes. There is an admirable division of qualities between the sexes, which the great Author of being has distributed to each with a wisdom which calls for our admiration.

Man is strong—woman is beautiful.

Man is daring and confident—woman is diffident and unassuming.

Man is great in action—woman in suffering.

Man shines abroad—woman at home.

Man talks to convince—woman to persuade and please.

Man has a rugged heart—woman a soft and tender one.

Man prevents misery—woman relieves it.

Man has science—woman has taste.

Man has judgment—woman has sensibility.

Man is a being of justice—woman is a being of mercy.

Affectionately yours,

R.

XIV.

PLATO'S PRECEPTS TO ARISTOTLE.

MY DEAR N——,

When we were in association, you oftentimes told me that Plato's precepts to Aristotle were very valuable. They are certainly most wise. Look at some of the precepts of Plato given to Aristotle. He says :—

1. "Know your Creator thoroughly, and pay constantly due reverence to Him."
2. "Be constantly learning and teaching, be more inclined to knowledge than anything else."
3. "Examine not men of letters in the amount of knowledge they possess, but in their deeds."
4. "Do not pray to God for temporary things, which will cease to do you good, and be sure that all gifts come from Him."
5. "Pray to God for everlasting gifts."
6. "Be always on the alert, for malignancy works in manifold disguises."
7. "Do not wish to do such things as are not worth doing."
8. "Be sure that all punishment which is inflicted upon men by God is not tyranny, but that it is correction and instruction."
9. "Do not value life nor fear death, except as means to an end."

10. "Do not sleep until you have put three questions to yourself.

- (a) Have I committed any sin?
- (b) Have I omitted any duty by accident?
- (c) Have I left anything undone intentionally?"

11. "Seek to remember your origin and to learn your future fate."

12. "Do not wound anyone, for there are ups and downs in life, and the very world itself is transient."

13. "He is unfortunate who does not meditate on the consequence of his own fault, and does not abstain from finding fault with others."

14. "Take no pride in those things which are alien to our nature."

Yours affectionately,

R.

XV.

FIRMNESS.

MY DEAR N——,

There was no necessity for your excuses.

My last letter was written in depression caused by poor Mahendra's death, who has left four children and his wife without a shilling. I have been endeavouring to assist them.

What a divine quality " Firmness " is.

O Fortitude! divinely bright.
 O Virtue's child, a man's delight!
 Descend an amicable guest,
 And with thy *firmness* steel my breast.

Firmness is an important quality, whether of the mind or of the body; it is one that commends itself to our grave consideration ; we all admire it, even those who do not comprehend its real value wonder at and respect it. We like to see firmness in a Government because it assures us that the ordinary course of our political and social life is secure, and we feel that the enjoyment of many of our most esteemed privileges depends on it. Sailors like to sail with a captain whose firmness keeps them under proper control in fine weather, and provides for their safety in storms. Workmen prefer a master who keeps firm discipline, to one who is uncertain or variable. Children are happier under firm management than when

left to alternations of severity and indulgence, or to a take-care-of-yourself system. Animals, too, are influenced by firmness ; it is well-known that lions or tigers have sometimes been prevented from making their attacks by those whom they threatened showing a bold front. Horses know when they have a firm rider on their back, and will very often throw off a weak one. We admire this quality in architecture also; it gratifies us to look on some old tower that has withstood the shocks of time for a thousand years or more; and we shrink from trusting ourselves to an edifice which is unsound.

From all points of view then it appears that firmness is a desirable quality; it partakes of the nature of decision, and if people would exercise it oftener than they do, they would find good results from it.

We can all look round among our neighbours, acquaintances, and friends, and see instances of want of firmness. Sometimes it is a tradesman who does not attend to his business ; he has not the firmness to enable him to resist temptation, and he wastes time and money in a tap-room.

Sometimes we see people living in perpetual discomfort, the slaves, as it were, of their servants, because they have not firmness to establish a vigorous domestic government.

How frequently do we hear of an individual in trouble "about a bill," because he had not the firmness to say "No" when asked to sign his name. How many in all ranks, and of all ages, from manhood to childhood, have been ruined from not having the resolution to say no ? How often do schoolboys get into trouble because, when tempted to play truant and go a-fishing, they cannot say no ? How many promising schemes have failed because

the firmness was lacking which should have carried them to a successful issue?

Firmness of purpose and character, as well as the want of it, are to be found in all degrees of life. Who is there that does not know personally one whom no opposition causes to waver? He has marked out a certain course for himself and steadily pursues it. If he meets with an obstacle, he fights manfully against it, until it is overcome.

There have been extraordinary and beautiful instances of firmness in women: mothers who have shown the most praiseworthy spirit in the upbringing of their family leading their children to high resolves and virtuous effort, often through sorrow and suffering.

The firmness of some people again animates them with the regularity and almost with the power of a steam-engine. Such individuals, whatever their sphere, stand out as noteworthy examples.

I have in these remarks considered firmness as associated with reasonableness, for no character can be complete without a union of the two. I do not advocate that sort of firmness which shuts the heart against kind and gentle influences; firmness and kindness must exist together. Neither would I encourage the firmness which boasts of itself as infallible, which never changes its mind. It has been truly said, that man who never alters his opinion is either very ignorant or very foolish. Donkeys and mules exhibit extraordinary firmness on occasions, even the cudgel fails to convince them that another line of conduct would be expedient. But brute firmness is only obstinacy, not far removed from stupidity, and I point it out in order that anyone reading these remarks and desiring to advance from weakness to firmness, may

at the same time control it by reason, and remember that :—

“ ——— obstinacy's ne'er so stiff
As when 'tis in a wrong belief.”

Accept my best regards. I have no one to be remembered to in Calcutta, and wish to hear nothing from it, but that you are well. It will be a pleasure to hear from you.

Yours affectionately,

R.

XVI.

MY THEISTIC FAITH.

MY DEAR N——,

The other day you wanted to know what were my views in regard to idolatry.

My faith is pre-eminently theistic; in this respect the spirit of Mahomed is my guide.

I tolerate no form of idolatry.

I detest the idea that God has His equal in any way. The doctrine of the co-equality of Jesus or Brahma, Vishnu or *Siva*¹ with the Most High, is regarded by me as heretical and blasphemous. God is self-existent and absolute from all eternity, and I believe that the supposition of the existence of another self-existent and absolute Being is morally absurd; as two things cannot exist at the same time in one place, so it is absurd to suppose that two eternal and absolute Beings can exist in the universe.

“God is one without a second” is my creed from the beginning.

He has a thousand manifestations—in the sun, moon, and stars, in rivers and mountains, in all material objects, in the soul of every man and woman, in the lives of great men, saints, and prophets, and supremely in the life of the Son of God—but to say that He has a co-equal, or that there is a second Being which is likewise absolutely self-existent and eternal, is idolatry, which has no place in my theism. I

¹ *Brahma, Vishnu* and *Siva*, the highest Gods of the Indian Theogony. They respectively typify the Deity as Creator, Preserver, and Destroyer or Transformer of the Universe.

say, with the prophet of Arabia, that God has no second.

The unity and the impersonality of the Godhead are the very foundations of Theosophy.

It has always been the subject of anxious enquiry with many of my friends, how a religion which, in its essence, is as iconoclastic as this, can have such a universal pantheon for saints and prophets.

Hinduism has its *Avatars*, saints, and prophets ; popular Christianity has a Trinity and a regiment of saints and martyrs ; Buddhism inculcates the belief in the Buddhas or Wise Men ; but though the *Avatars*, prophets, saints, gods, and goddesses of all these religions are included in the pale of Theosophy, yet I say that my religion is pre-eminently theistic, yea, more, it is iconoclastic in spirit.

The aspect of "Brahmoism" is altogether new. The sceptics may ridicule it, the sectarians may stumble at it, the rationalists may hold it in contempt, but it is nevertheless a new revelation—a novel feature of my holy faith. I enjoy the peculiar privilege of being Hindu with the Hindus without sharing in their idolatry and superstition. I am a Christian with the Christians without believing in the existence of three distinct, eternal, co-equal, self-existent, and personal beings as Gods, which is the effect of popular Christian teaching. I am a believer in the Buddhistic communion of saints, and yet free from the faith in the multiplicity of eternal persons. The eternal principles of right and wrong, I believe with the Zoroastrians, without believing in the eternal personality of Evil. I am an Indian, and my forefathers have taught me that God is One without a second, and that His substance is all-

pervading. As the air fills all space ; as the light of the sun shines in every corner of the world's surface, so does the presence of the divine Substance fill all space and time, the material and the spiritual universe. The doctrine of the all-pervading real Presence of the Divine Being may not be appreciated by the wise men of the West. The Semitic people may not understand it, but we Indians, by our birth-right as it were, have inherited this truth from our forefathers. God has no temple either in heaven or on earth to dwell in, but everything that exists is full of His supreme Presence ; He is the Life and Support of everything ; He pervades the universe of matter and spirit as the fire pervades the charcoal which it burns. We cannot separate any particle of matter or soul from the all-embracing Presence of the Lord, as we cannot separate the fire from the charcoal. The Absolute Be-ness exists from all eternity, His will is supreme.

"By His command," as the Sikh¹ scripture says, "the universe has been created ; by His command sorrow and happiness come and go."

Not a sparrow falleth but by His will, He is the Great Allah, the supreme Lord of all. But though we believe that God is the be-all and the end-all of everything, yet we as theists steer clear of the error of Pantheism and Fatalism which are the curses of Hindustan.

The sum and substance of Theosophy is this :—That God is One Supreme without a second, and that His manifestations are beyond number. Well has Guru Nanak² said that, "A thousand eyes hast Thou, and yet

¹ The *Granth* is the name of the Scriptures of the Sikhs. The great Book is kept in the Golden Temple at Amritsar.

² Sháh Nánák' known as Guru Nának, is the spiritual Teacher and Founder of the Sikhs; he was born near Lahore, 1469. He preached

Thou hast no eyes ; a thousand holy feet hast Thou, and yet Thou hast not a single foot ; Thou hast no form and yet thousand forms are Thine." Let us be strictly true to the spirit of "Brahmoism" and hold fast to the truth that God is One, the only Absolute and Eternal Person, and honour all things of the material, or the spiritual world in which the Lord manifests Himself.

Yours affectionately,

R.

abolition of caste, the Unity of the Godhead, and purity and morality of life.

XVII.

THE BEAUTIFUL.

MY DEAR N——,

A good many of your questions have been lying with me unanswered, I doubt whether I shall be able to answer them as they deserve.

I take up one which is interesting to you and me alike.

I have formed my idea of "The Beautiful"—from whom and from what you know best—my ideal "Beauty" in all its bearings is known to you. I expressed my views to you once before. At that time you liked them much; you liked them, I can safely say, not because they were meritorious, but because they came to you from me.

What is the Beautiful? What is the source of the æsthetic consciousness? What is there in the object which we call beautiful, that gives us disinterested pleasure—a pleasure in which we expect others to share? A beautiful object is a source of pleasure to us, but unlike sensuous pleasures, it is not confined to any particular individual.

When we say that an object is beautiful, we feel that we have a right to call upon others to agree with us. A beautiful object is not pleasurable to me alone: it is so to all alike.

Another characteristic of the feeling of beauty is that it is disinterested. An object that affects us agreeably as *sensuous* beings, creates in us an ardent desire for its possession. But not so an object that we pronounce beautiful. A beautiful object is one the mere idea of which is accom-

panied with satisfaction, apart altogether from a desire for it.

The mind feels a pure joy in contemplating beautiful objects, "seeking for some conception, it knows not what, which half reveals and half conceals itself."

All selfish motives are, for the time being, banished from the mind.

Now, what makes an object beautiful? If the pleasure which we experience in contemplating it is universally communicable, it must be based upon some universal conception. And yet the characteristic of Beauty is that it repels the efforts of the mind to bring it under a definite conception.

The conception which we strive to get at "half reveals and half conceals itself."

To determine the *Aesthetic Consciousness*, it is necessary first to indicate what it is not. Now, the *Aesthetic Consciousness* is to be distinguished both from the *Scientific* and the *Moral Consciousness*. The aim of *Science* is to trace the necessary connections of phenomena. It starts with the assumption of the unity and the uniformity of *Nature*, and seeks to verify it. *Science* aims at determining the world as a complete whole, in which all phenomena are necessarily connected with each other, and in which there is no room left for chance or accident. That which stimulates the scientific impulse is the *presupposed idea* of the unity and uniformity of *Nature*. This idea it is the object of science to verify. But a complete verification of it is next to impossible. Our finite Consciousness being limited by time and space, it is impossible for it to rise above its limitation, and to determine the world as a whole of mutually determining parts. Under the guidance of the

idea of the unity and uniformity of Nature, "the scientific impulse traces the determination of event by event in a series to which it finds neither beginning nor end." The labour of science is, therefore, endless. To Science nothing is a whole or an end in itself. It finds that every object exists only through its necessary connection with other objects.

The idea of Nature as a systematic whole of inter-related parts is no doubt the guiding thread of Science, but it is only an idea. Such a whole, or *res completa*, can never be an object of experience.

In respect of the impossibility of reaching the ideal. Morality is akin to Science. The incessant struggle to realise our Higher Self is the root-principle of Morality. But, however far we may advance morally, it is impossible for us to attain the Moral ideal. After all our struggle, we have to admit that our Higher Self is not realised. Indeed, it cannot be realised. Self-consciousness is infinite, but in us, it is limited by time and space. That which constitutes Time and Space, that for which the Universe exists, finds itself limited by that which, in a sense, is its own product, in us. Human nature, therefore, is a contradiction. The Moral impulse is the impulse to solve this contradiction. The Moral life "rests on the fact that Reason or Self-consciousness is the form of an infinite content,¹ and has in it the never-ceasing impulse to make the actual life adequate to its ideal form." But Moral Life cannot solve its own contradiction.

"It gives us, instead of the infinite, only the *endless* negation of the finite."

Moral Life, therefore, is a life of endless progress. It aims at an ideal which always eludes its grasp.

¹ Content, i.e., that which is contained.

In the *Æsthetic Consciousness*, we do not find that *progressus ad infinitum* which is the characteristic of Science and Morality. Here, the mind does not, as in Science, seek to find the ideal of unity which belongs to it in Nature, nor does it seek, as in Morality, to realise that ideal, but it finds the ideal of unity *realised* in beautiful objects. The beautiful object is not a limit to our spirit which we struggle to remove, as we do in Moral Life. "Our joy in beauty is the greeting of the spirit to the object that ceases to appear to it as a limit." In contemplating beautiful objects the spirit is in harmony with itself, because in it, it "rejoices to find itself or an analogon to itself." The beautiful object is not a mere part of Nature. We do not exhaust its meaning by tracing the relations in which it stands to other objects. There is something in it which we cannot distinctly grasp, which "half reveals and half conceals itself." It is a whole, a *res completa*. Through it an Eternal and Undying Something seems to reveal itself with which our spirit seems to be familiar, but which it cannot distinctly recognise. In the contemplation of the beautiful object, the spirit feels itself raised above the limitations of the world of sense. The *Æsthetic Consciousness* removes, for the first time, the discord of our Moral Life. We no longer struggle to realise ourselves, because we feel ourselves *realised*. In the *Æsthetic Consciousness* the mind is in harmony with itself because it is realised above its limitations and identified with the Supersensible Reality that "half reveals and half conceals itself" through the beautiful object.

But, it may be asked, is not all this an illusion? Is not the beautiful object a mere part of Nature after all?

Is it anything more than a mere "congeries of relations"?

To answer these questions, it is only necessary to reflect that the inter-relation of the parts of nature is made possible only by a Unifying Consciousness which is present to each term of relation, but is limited by none. One of the greatest philosophers, Babington Macaulay, tells us has endeavoured to show that Nature exists only in relation to a Unifying Consciousness, and we need not, therefore, repeat the argument. All objects are at once real and ideal, so says Madame D'Arblay, one of England's greatest thinkers. They are real in so far as they are parts of Nature and ideal in so far as they are the manifestations of an eternally complete Consciousness. An object is beautiful in so far as it reveals its ideal meaning, not in the language of reason, but in the language of sense. In the beautiful object, we do not *comprehend* but *feel* the Ideal Unity of Nature. Hence it is that it "half reveals and half conceals itself." *Ideally* the individual object involves the whole world and so is a kind of world in itself; really it is a mere part of Nature. In the former aspect it is beautiful. But that aspect is in the Æsthetic Consciousness only indistinctly realised.

The Æsthetic Consciousness is akin to Religion and Philosophy, and occupies a higher place than Science and Morality. The conception of the Unity of Nature, which is the guiding thread of Science, is the Ideal of the Spiritual Unity of Nature. Of course, Science does not recognise this. But it is not the business of Science to prove and to inquire into the meaning of the Unity and Uniformity of Nature. To Science the Unity and Uniformity of Nature is only an *assumption*. Under the guidance

of the idea of the Unity and Uniformity of Nature, Science carries on its investigations but can never complete them. In Morality, we seek to realise this ideal in individual life. But such an attempt only gives rise to an endless progress. In the *Æsthetic Consciousness* we *feel* ourselves identified with it. In Religion, we commune with it, and in Philosophy we speculatively comprehend this Ideal Unity as the *truth* of Nature and of our individual life. That which we *comprehend* in Philosophy, we only feel in the *Æsthetic Consciousness*, as "half revealing and half concealing itself" through the object.

Yours affectionately,

R.

XVIII.

THE GRACE OF GOD.

MY DEAR N——,

I received only yesterday a letter from you. What occasioned the delay I know not.

We are familiar with the expression *Brahmo Kripahi Kebalam* or "only God's grace availeth." Very few persons realise what the real meaning of the expression is: with some it is mere cant—sound without substance—with others it is a superstition. The worldly and the wicked, the sceptic and the unbeliever, the idle and the listless, are known to use the expression freely in justification of their own wrong doing; the ignorant and the superstitious use it in its narrowest and most unworthy sense. These consider that God is whimsical, and that, like frail man, He is moved to change His purpose through the entreaties or the misconduct of His creatures. Thus offerings and expiations of various kinds are made, and prayers and supplications are sent forth either to appease His wrath or to draw forth His grace.

That both these theories are fallacious the religion of the Theosophists has conclusively proved.

What then is this grace of God without which no man can do anything? If grace is all-sufficient, then why should man work and toil? and again, if it always exists, why should man prize it so much and put forth his energies to attain it? These questions have puzzled devotees and theologians at all times.

There exists a mysterious and wonderful relation between man's endeavour and God's grace. Grace is all-sufficient and absolutely free, and yet it is dependent upon human endeavours. Who knows not that the increase which our fields yield is given by the free grace of God? nevertheless the industry of the husbandman is absolutely necessary for it. The expression "pump and pray" is often used in the sense that the merit of doing good belongs both to God and man. We consider such an assertion blasphemous.

Divine grace, like God Himself, is all-powerful and omnipresent. God is everywhere and His grace, like the beams of His countenance, sheds its effulgence in all places at all times. It is in and around all objects. The whole firmament is full of the grace of God. In the sun, moon and stars; in mountains, rivers and seas; in all the laws of Nature; in all objects of the material and the spiritual world, the grace of God is present; it is working with almighty energy. It makes the sun shine, the rains descend, and the winds blow; man and woman, the whole creation lives and moves through it. It supplies food and raiment to the children of men, the universe is supported and sustained by the grace of God.

Who can comprehend its operations?

It acts often silently and naturally as in the act of respiration or the circulation of the blood. In the material world the wind blows, distributing life and health to all creatures, but unnoticed and unheeded by man or woman except when it rages high: so it is with the grace of God; it operates at all times. It is the life of all creatures, and in it is the salvation of the children of men who enjoy it always; but man is scarcely conscious of its ordinary

The negative work of the grace of God who can measure?

St. Augustine truly thanked God because He did not allow his soul to perish. Our hearts are callous, and we feel not how much we owe to divine grace. Mahomed has well said that " whatsoever good befalleth thee is from thyself." When the sinner is seized by divine grace he is carried by it as a child of her womb is carried by its mother. At every step he is wonderfully led into the region of peace and purity.

I have seen the picture of an infant carried in the arms of an angel over seas and over mountains to the abode of Heaven; the angel is the representation of the grace of God and the infant is the believer who has been caught up by divine grace. Though it is beyond the comprehension of man to understand the laws whereby the grace of God is regulated (for grace has been compared to the wind of Heaven, which cometh and goeth without letting anyone know its course), yet so far as it has been revealed to us, there is no gainsaying the fact that a child-like faith, obedience, and dependence upon God are the conditions for acquiring and increasing the grace of God in our soul.

* * * *

I pray you to accept these words as a sincere proof of my attachment to your real interests, and to believe that I am and always shall be,

Your affectionate friend,

R.

XIX.

THE SPIRIT OF CHRJST.

MY DEAR N——,

You must please not expect me to do anything *in extenso*. To write about Love *in extenso* would mean a house full of folio volumes.

Pray for it.

The Spirit of Christ is the Holy Ghost, God the Holy Spirit, the great gift of the Gospel for our sanctification. Without the Incarnation the Holy Spirit could not be given. He is the Bond of Love between the Persons of the Eternal and Blessed Trinity and without HIM we cannot be united to God. You will see the importance of this when you consider that we are created to please not ourselves, but God, but our sinfulness prevents us from doing this. Sanctification, therefore, is necessary; Christ gave us this gift and showed us how to baptize with water and the Holy Ghost. "If a man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." The mistake people make is to think in their pride that they can somehow *get* the Holy Spirit for themselves, as you get a cloth at a shop, by doing for it some good work. The nearer a man comes to God the more he abandons his own unholiness and seeks the Spirit of Christ for his sanctification. .

Believe me, yours ever,

R.

XX.
LOWLINESS.

MY DEAR N——,

If any one wishes to raise themselves in the estimation of men, says the worldly wise, he should be like the Pharisees of old, who made broad their phylacteries, enlarged the borders of their garments, loved the chief places at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, the salutations in the market places, and to be called of men, Rabbi. The dress, gesture, the manner of walking and talking which he assumes, are unostentatiously regulated in such a way as to attract attention, and to make people around him readily acknowledge his eminence.

But the lowly, unless he is put forward by another, must ever remain unheeded and unacknowledged. In spite of his intrinsic merits, he is doomed to rot in darkness and neglect, while the man who makes a great noise in the world is hailed by the public as a benefactor, and is raised to the third heaven. We do not grudge such men the popular applause they obtain. When they sacrifice all other things at the altar of popularity, they have a right to the rewards they have chosen.

“To the majority of our countrymen, when the conduct of James II. during the revolution seemed of incalculable importance, there would have seemed,” says an historian, “something ludicrously absurd in the assertion that the newly-discovered differential calculus was infinitely more important to England and to Europe than the fate of all the dynasties; and few things could have seemed more remote from any useful end than this product of mathematical genius; yet it is now clear to everyone

that the conduct of James was supremely insignificant in comparison with this discovery."

This is not the only instance that might be brought forward to prove the superior attraction of things of immediate utility. It is a fact borne out by the history of nations that things remote from daily needs, and related with the far future, made no impression on the popular mind. Even the wise fail to form a proper estimation of benefits that seem to be remote. If any mention of them be found in the pages of history, it is a mere passing notice amongst other events that have done little or no good to humanity.

This incapacity of the popular mind to appreciate things of lasting importance has led Great Souls to shun public applause; they preferred to remain intent upon the Inner Light, and gave no heed to what men thought. They were meek and lowly, they sought not to attract public attention, but to please the Lord who ever rewarded them in secret. When all was dark and gloomy, and the acceptance of the Truth by the world was hopeless, and even men who bent their knees and made obeisance as humble disciples proved faithless, it was a clear insight into the future that prompted these Great Souls to prophesy the ultimate triumph of the Truth for which they were hated and persecuted in their lifetime. They paraded no virtues, and were charged by men with many unworthy things, the foremost of which had reference to their lowliness. They ever sought the company of the poor, nay even that of sinners and publicans; men of eminent position feared to mix with them, lest they should be lowered in the estimation of the people. Those amongst them who felt some devotion for these sons of God, would approach them secretly.

Why, under all these disadvantages, did saints, pious men and prophets gladly pursue a path which covered them with so much indignity? There must be some peculiar significance in the fact that they combined lowness with magnanimity of mind.

Undoubtedly this was a condition necessary to the attainment of high spirituality, or we should not see it invariably repeated in every great life.

Let me try to explain what we understand by this invariable recurrence of the same combination of lowness and magnanimity.

It is admitted by every thoughtful man that Great Souls are pre-eminently sincere. What they feel within they express.

There is no show, no display: all is real! They fearlessly express their internal conviction, undisturbed by its immediate results.

Whence comes this fearlessness, this strong conviction?

It comes from the Light and Strength they receive from above. Their sincerity convinces them of their own nothingness, and they are humbled to the dust before the Author of their being.

It is this attitude of the soul which enables them to receive unceasingly Heavenly Illumination. This is lowness in the true sense of the term. In this lowness is reflected the glory that surrounds the children of God. No pride, no self-exaltation mars the beauty of their lowness, although the (unseen) halo of heavenly effulgence ever encircles them and marks them out as His peculiar children.

What then is the philosophy of lowness?

It is the common philosophy of *Yoga* that helps us to entirely get rid of self, and to live in God always.

Yours affectionately, R.

XXI.

LOYALTY AND CRITICISM.

MY DEAR N——,

Meekness and lowliness have been extolled above all virtues. All admire them in theory, but, put to the test, men deprecate the lowly and meek, they consider them mean and weak, and wholly incapable of public usefulness.

Loyalty is connected with religion, and with the subversion of religion it becomes almost extinct. “The powers that be are from the Lord,” is a proposition which is often ridiculed.

Submission to the reigning power, even if it be foreign, has been illustrated by the life of one who fitly represents humanity. He was meek and lowly, and therefore could abide by a decision which was unjust (so far as equity was concerned), but in which, with uncommon insight, he saw hidden a higher purpose which would teach men obedience, even unto the will of God.

The world—sceptical and ungrateful—has reaped the fruit of this sacrifice, and profited by it; but such is its blindness, that if any one should enunciate the proposition which lies under it, he would be subjected to public odium, because it militates against freedom—wrongly so-called. No nation is saved except by great sacrifices, no sacrifice is possible unless a man be lowly and meek. What are these—meekness and lowliness—but the denying of self and freely giving all that one has for the good of others?

To be quarrelsome and abusive is impossible to such men. If they are ever subjected to injustice, and they see it to be inevitable from the circumstances of the case, they submit, believing that the injustice done to them will be repaid in the good of others. They believe disloyalty in word or deed to be highly irreligious; an abomination in the sight of God and of righteous men, and detrimental to the interests of mankind.

But it is not well that we should always remain silent, fearing that any word that may come out of our mouth may offend the powerful. The true exemplar of meekness and lowliness knew how to condemn as well as to submit. His death was hastened by the uncompromising rebukes which he directed against those that were in power, and who persuaded their ruler to be an instrument in their hands for destroying his life. His enemies had often tried to involve him in an offence which would amount to treason against the ruling power, and this he always avoided, not from fear, nor from any unworthy motive, but because of his loyalty to the Great King, whose representative he saw in the person of the earthly Potentate. If it be contended that he was not concerned with the things of this world, and that therefore he submitted to everything as it came, we say that his submission to the condemnation of death was marked with a feeling that unmistakably revealed his belief in the unearthly origin of earthly powers.

It may be argued that the time has changed, that this is an age of fair criticism; the great powers now gladly submit to it. Of this great change we are glad to avail ourselves, and we take advantage of it whenever it may do good service both to the rulers and the ruled. But to enjoy this privilege which time has offered us, we hold it our great

duty to be the more meek and lowly, in order that an abuse of privilege may not result. Criticism evoked by loyal feeling is, as a rule, marked by the virtues which adorned the great exemplar whom everyone should reverentially imitate.

"Reverence is not incompatible with independence;" said a great man, and I say it is not incompatible with fair criticism.

There is no relation so high as that of a spiritual guide and a disciple in the Hindu scriptures; but in matters of fair criticism they allow so great a latitude that *the suppression of criticism is counted as no merit at all*. Criticism therefore, we say, unreservedly, but never for any reason go beyond the limit which is prescribed by the great virtues ever accompanying genuine feelings of loyalty. To be cynical and unscrupulous in criticising others, shows ill breeding when we apply our critical acumen in depreciating men of equal standing with ourselves, and when it is directed against our superiors, it destroys those virtues which we value above all the riches of the world. Criticism actuated by reverence and loyal feeling does immense good both to those to whom it is directed, or from whom it proceeds. I see no reason why your countrymen should not make meekness and lowliness their leading virtues, and in criticising for the sake of Truth and Good, make use of such expressions only as are compatible with these virtues. Loyalty to God, loyalty to virtue, loyalty to King, loyalty to our superiors, loyalty to a Cause, yea, every form of loyalty has for its constituent meekness and lowliness, which breed gentleness of spirit, and a distaste for all that is scurrilous and grossly opprobrious. It is loyalty that adjusts a happy relation between the rulers and the

ruled, and never allows a word to escape which may raise suspicion and breed ill-feeling. Loyalty we hold as our law, because without it we cannot hope to attain to those virtues which ennable us and raise us in the scale of Humanity. We should never assume that any of our countrymen are disloyal, their national feeling revolts against it, still it is to be regretted that they are often betrayed by their ill-directed zeal into expressions which may sometimes be construed into disloyalty. Loyalty, we have seen, leads us to virtues that are Buddha-like. I am not therefore ashamed of magnifying it above all, and recommending it to my educated fellow countrymen.

Yours affectionately,

R.

XXII.

THE USES OF PAIN.

MY DEAR N——,

You must expect but few thoughts of value about Pain from a man of my poor knowledge, yet, let me try my utmost to furnish you with some of them.

Much has been said and done lately in connection with what is called *Hypnotism*.

It appears that some persons have found themselves to be in possession of a power of will, by means of which they can cause others to obey them without their being conscious of any bodily sensation.

Thus a dentist draws teeth without any suffering on the part of the patient, and without the use of any opiate.

M. Charcot, the eminent French hypnotist, is said to have declared that the exercise of this force, except by physicians using it for purposes of healing, should be punishable by law. A person having this power might cause infinite harm, by removing pain in order to relieve the object of his pity; the doctors might be prevented from treating the case for want of symptoms.

Again we read in stories of old times of harm being done by witchcraft. A wax figure of the enemy would be made and pierced with pins in one part or another: meantime, according to the story, the enemy suffers and wastes away, as though his own body were being tortured, till one day the witch plants a black bodkin in the heart of her wax figure, and the distant foe expires. Such horrors

might actually take place now if hypnotism became common. A man might drink vitriol or leap into the fire or water because his unseen enemy willed it.

One of the greatest questions which philosophers have been asking ever since man learnt to be curious is, *What is the use of pain?* The above remarks point very clearly to a simple answer on this physical side. Pain then, will appear to be a divinely appointed safeguard against further, or fatal harm, to creatures of every kind. Without pain a child might go on playing with one foot on the fire until that member was destroyed. As it is, a touch of the heat makes the child instinctively shrink away, and the pain not only saves him from further injury, but "the burnt child dreads the fire" and it takes care not to go so near again. This is why the skin is tender and sensitive, in order that we may have a warning of the beginning of injury.

Pain is a warning for the present and an experience for future use. It also suggests methods of treatment, by showing the exact point attacked by the disease; the removal of pain might actually become a very serious danger.

These, however, are all negative advantages. Still confining ourselves to the physical side, we can see much positive benefit arising out of pain. Thus the law of self-preservation has caused animal life to develop and evolve continually to higher stages, by the strengthening of this or that member according to need. The lower we go in the scale of life, the less pain we find, simply because it is less needed as a safeguard. The lower organisms have wonderful powers of reproduction. A crab can easily grow a new limb if one be lost, but we have to do without a hand or foot when once it has been cut off.

Even such thoughts as these may help to reconcile us to the existence of this factor in our lives, and make us less inclined to wonder about the purpose of the Creator. But we may take far higher grounds.

First with regard to ourselves, as individuals. If we could have no experience of suffering, physical or mental where would self-denial be possible? How could the will be trained to submit to a higher Will? This is one of the purposes in self-mortification and fasting. Moreover, remove pain, and you remove pleasure, and life becomes monotonous, stagnant, dead. But our duty to our fellows demands self-denial. Love is only possible at the cost of self. And then with regard to the troubles we see around us—without them where would there be scope for the virtues of pity and charity?

But higher still—"the Word became flesh." The word translated "flesh" signifies the soft parts of the body which, by means of the nerves and the blood vessels with which they are pervaded, are found to be the seats of physical sensibility, of pleasure and pain. The Son of God, assuming our nature, took also this part of it without which we could only offer sacrifices which cost us nothing. Thus God chose to show His Love for man by undergoing as Man the utmost pain man can suffer in body as well as in soul, for ever sanctifying this feature of our physical being, by uniting it with the most exalted Love.

Yours affectionately,

R.

XXIII.

LOVE AND FREEDOM.

MY DEAR N——,

In my letter on "Threefold Obedience" the conclusion was, that in love that highest form of obedience is attained wherein no effort is required on the part of the devotee in carrying out the injunctions of the Son even at the greatest sacrifices.

It now remains to ascertain the conditions which lead to such a happy consummation of our highest aim in our relations with God.

We have heard of old, "Perfect love casteth out fear." In fear, they say, is the beginning of religion. It is a matter of dispute whether the first man adored the Author of his being through love or through fear. Most probably it was love or gratitude that first moved him to give utterance to his inner sentiment. However it may be, it is certain that fear in relation to God is not natural, in so far as it results only from the violation of moral and spiritual laws. We offend Him when we depart from the course of life which He has defined for our good. Human nature is not, as is often contended, at enmity with God. It is a fall from our natural state that brings about that disobedience the fruit of which is sin and iniquity. Many trace this fall to man's Free Will and support their view with good reasons. But upon deeply considering the matter, we find that when we succumb to certain temptations we lose our Freedom of Will, and are tossed to and

fro by unruly passions. Our Freedom is therefore closely connected with righteousness. Righteousness means harmony with the Divine Will; where harmony is, there reigns perfect Love Supreme. Thus Freedom and Love are eternally bound together. The spirit ever rests in the Great Spirit and not a breath disturbs its repose in Him; He breathes Power, Wisdom and Love into the spirit, and it uses them freely as its own. In this state of perfect union which we have called harmony with the Divine Will, the spirit enjoys Freedom. But as soon as this harmony is lost owing to its attachment to things not Divine, Freedom and Love depart from it and it is thrown into a state of turmoil.

An unrighteous man cannot love his neighbour, nay he often falls out with his own relations. A perfect control over the passions is required in order to be loving and forgiving. A truly loving and forgiving man is free, because he is not subject to fits of passion. It is not therefore, we say, in the power of man to sever Love and Freedom from their close relation.

It is often heard that Love enslaves a man, and the poets, accepting this popular notion, have presented Love in vitiated colours. Two hearts cannot perfectly unite unless influenced by righteousness. Dissension and discord come from the devil, but peace, harmony and Love flow from the Spirit of God. In schismatic quarrels and sectarian hatred, carried on in the name of religion, the element of Love is wanting. Churches would never divide and deluge the earth with hundreds of denominations, were Love in them to prevent people from falling out. If it be contended that the wayward can never be kept together by exercising Love when their capacity to be

influenced by it is gone, we accept the objection as valid, but we cannot justify those who deny the power of Love on this score, seeing that this must be an occasion when we are most bound to show Love to the wayward as does the Heavenly Mother. A wayward son may fly from the presence of his mother, and roam in strange lands, but the heart of the mother is rent with grief, and she ever bewails the absence of her dear son. If any one falls out with or forsakes us, we are not thereby justified in bearing hatred towards him. The history of schism shows that men separate from their brethren mostly from trivial causes—mere intellectual dissent often forming the occasion for separation.

This is to be greatly deplored. Even on moral grounds, where the separation may be justified, we need not be so hard as to render future reconciliation impossible in this life. In the name of righteous indignation many give vent to their revengeful spirit. This, to say the least of it, is most reprehensible.

If Christ used hard words towards Pharisees for hypocrisy and vain show, he did so because he felt for them keenly as do mothers for the gross misdeeds of the children of their womb. When, in great anguish, he bewailed Jerusalem, his tenderness of heart knew no bounds. *Such a loving heart has a right to reprove others*, but those who do not feel for the sinners as tenderly as Jesus did, should never permit themselves to use hard words, knowing that their conduct may break the hearts of the sinners, and hinder their redemption.

Want of Love, we say again, even corrupted the deliberations of Councils, inasmuch as the members could have treated their opponents with consideration, and

gained a victory over them by Love, ultimately bringing them back into the fold. They gave themselves up to violent passions instead, with swords and fagots punished their brethren, and marked them out as heretics in order to perpetuate their hatred, and through it to influence the untold generations to come. Such men were not free from anger, revenge, and other ill-feelings, hence it was that they had neither the Freedom nor Love that would enable them to treat their opponents with Charity. Freedom and Love, as we have defined above, are twins, and the one can hardly be divorced from the other without losing them both.

What the world has failed to realise for want of harmony, Theosophy proposes to fulfil.

It is not for me to say how far this purpose of Theosophy has been carried out in individual lines, but of this *WE ARE SURE, that Freedom and Love shall henceforth reign together*, and all schismatic quarrels and sectarian hatred shall cease at no distant date.

* * * *

I have hopes that the Cause will triumph, but whether it does or does not, still honour must be kept in mind.

Yours affectionately,

R.

XXIV.

THE OBJECT OF EDUCATION.

MY DEAR N——,

With very many thanks I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter. The question you put is a most important one.

We are told that the main object of education is training by exercise. Strictly speaking, that is the method and not the object. When we seek to know the object of education we mean to enquire *why* we seek it and not *how* we seek it.

Firstly, as regards the young school boy, he has no definite object in view, it is the teacher's duty to give him the right view of it, and it is a pity that this important duty is seldom attended to.

Secondly, as regards the object with which parents send their young ones to school, it is not the same in all cases. Some send them merely with the motive of getting rid of them for a time. Some do it as a matter of form, simply because it has been the custom. Many send them with mercenary motives. They think that a good education will enable their sons to make money for them, or at least for themselves. Few are influenced by the desire to make them good and wise. As a matter of fact in some countries money is the object most parents have in view, and that is the object they try to impress upon their children.

But why is it that they pay so much attention to money? Why do people seek money? To promote happiness. Thus money is not the end and aim; it is a

means to an end. The object they really have in view is happiness. It is because they think that money makes men happy that they crave for it, and thus instead of craving with an end in view they crave like mad people without any end in view.

To sum up:—Happiness is the primary object, and money is only a secondary object, although the former is often lost sight of and the latter may appear to be the real object on that account.

Thirdly, as regards the objects of teachers in educating their pupils; here also it is not the same in all cases. The least worthy teach only to make money for themselves; their only object is to please both the pupils and their parents. Such teachers must by all means be avoided. They are deficient in moral tone and in good sense; they spoil their pupils in their eagerness to please them in every possible way, and also by their bad example. Fortunately few teachers belong to this class and I hope their number will drop to zero, in accordance with the law of the *survival of the fittest*.

With others the main object is that of passing their pupils through examinations. This is very narrow-minded and short-sighted. Examination is not the end of education, it is merely a test of it. Such tests cannot in the nature of things be quite perfect; unfortunately they are not half as good even as they might be.

Teachers, therefore, fall short of the mark when they aim at the test instead of aiming at the object of their work. Theirs is a sacred mission. They are amongst God's agents for spreading the blessings of education, and thus promoting the happiness of mankind; they fail ignominiously in doing their duty towards God and man when they

disregard their true mission. Carelessly conducted as examinations are at the present day, boys can pass by mere cram, without growing wiser and without receiving any real education. To discharge his duty in the useful sphere in which he works, must be the teacher's working motive. The sooner he learns to do so the better for him, for his pupils, and for the human race. For *him*, because he cannot be good and wise and happy while he fails to discharge his duty towards God and man ; for *his pupils*, because instead of making them cram for examinations, he will impart to them a sound education ; for the *human race*, because the pupils of this day are the grown-up men and women and working agents of the coming day, when every well-trained pupil will become a good and wise worker for the human race, while badly-trained pupils, crammed with books or stuffed with information which they are not able to digest, will turn out noisy, self-conceited, short-sighted dogmatists, prone to speak or write with an air of authority, leading credulous people astray. Witness those noisy enemies of religion, of philanthropy, and of temperance, who work much mischief in the name of science. As a matter of fact, they violate the liberal, prudent, philanthropic, truth-respecting principles of science. These are the worst enemies of science, for the truths of religion, philosophy, and temperance which they oppose form the most important part of science, properly so called.

Yours affectionately,

R.

XXV.

THE CHOICE OF FRIENDS.

MY DEAR N——,

Since friends affect each other so powerfully, either for good or evil, great care is necessary for their selection. A few hints may be given under this head.

1. *No immoral man should be made a friend* :—The greater his talents, the greater the danger. Vice is like poison in milk, causing the whole to be contaminated. Neglect of this rule has been the ruin of untold millions.

2. *Frivolous triflers should be shunned* :—There are some men who are not vicious, who are sprightly and entertaining; but who lack industry and moral earnestness. Idleness is very apt eventually to lead such persons into a downward course. Even if they should not go so far, their life can neither be happy nor useful. The influence of such men can be only injurious.

3. *Our chosen friends should be amiable in disposition and sound in judgment* :—Solomon says, “ Make no friendship with an angry man.” He who is wanting in prudence, is altogether unfit to advise us in our difficulties. An old poet remarks :—

“ So if he be
Friend to himself, who would be friend to thee.”

4. *High principles should be regarded as essential* :—“ I lay it down as a fundamental maxim,” says Cicero, “ that true friendship can subsist only between those who are animated

by the strictest principles of honour and virtue." David's rule was, "I am a companion of all those that fear Thee, and of them that keep Thy precepts." Friendship founded on such principles, will prove an unmixed blessing, and can never be broken.

5. *Friends should be few and well-selected* :—The human heart is not large enough to find room for many. He who boasts of a long list of friends is generally little esteemed. We may have many acquaintances, but we can have only a few friends.

"True happiness
Consists not in a multitude of friends,
But in their worth and choice."

Our friends should be chosen, as far as possible, from persons of the same rank as ourselves. They can best sympathise with us and aid us with their counsel.

Yours affectionately,

R.

XXVI.

SINCERITY

OR

SINE CERA.

MY DEAR N——,

Is not sincerity to be looked upon as the first important quality on the surface of the world? Yes, I emphatically say it is.

The history of the word "sincere" should be treasured up by every man and woman, young or old. *Sincerity* is one of the most beautiful words in the English language; and, like many other words, it has a history. It comes you see, from two Latin words, *sine* and *cera*, without cement; and its origin was in this wise. In the golden days of Roman prosperity, when her merchants were very affluent, and dwelt in marble palaces on the banks of the Tiber, there was amongst them a very natural rivalry in the grandeur and artistic adornments of their dwellings. Their successful wars had made many of the gems of Grecian Art the possession of the Roman people. A taste for sculpture had been awakened, and the sons of Rome themselves set to work in the school of design. But trickery sometimes took place then as now. For instance, if the sculptor came upon a flaw in the marble, or if his chisel missed its aim, he had a carefully-constructed cement with which he filled in the defect, and so cleverly filled it as to be imperceptible. In time, however, and after the

purchase had long been completed, heat or damp or accident would affect the cement, and it would reveal its presence there. The consequence was that, when new contracts came to be signed for works of art, there was a clause put in that they were to be *sine cera*, or without cement. This is the history of the word "sincere."

What a picture-story in the word!

Adieu.

Believe me yours ever,

R.

XXVII.

DO SOMETHING.

MY DEAR N———,

I cannot say how grateful I am to you for the very kind and affectionate enquiries made through telegram after telegram after my health, during my late illness; it is only because you look upon me as your friend—nay, your very best friend. So much the better for me, for I know full well that nobody ever had such good fortune as to secure a place in the very core of your heart,—several wish for it though. I know not with what golden eyes and under what auspices we met and made friends with each other!

God bless you!

Some time ago you put me a question, “What to do?” I advise you to “Do Something.” It is truly a melancholy spectacle to see so many drones in the great and busy hive of human life. We daily see young men of education, and who possess more than ordinary natural gifts, lounging about as listlessly as if there was nothing in the boundless universe worthy of their attention.

How utterly lost to manhood are many sons of wealthy parents. No ambition, no hope, no ardent desire ever spurs them on to leap from obscurity into the broad daylight of renown. Their lives, which should be full of noble achievements, are dawdled away in unholy dissipations. If such is to become the universal effect of wealth

on the rising generation, it were far better that poverty should for ever be the handmaid of our sons and daughters. In the name of common humanity I call on all young men to *do something*. Do not sneak from the cradle of infancy to the coffin of oblivion without, at least, one great effort to prove you have not lived in vain. Fame and honour are never achieved with folded arms or through "masterly inactivity." When the sublime wisdom of common sense taught Columbus that there was a new world, he did not preach his beliefs with idle hands and lack-lustre eye. Discoveries in science and art are not made by men who regard life as a holiday of idleness. If you would achieve fame, if you would win the applause of your fellow men, if you would gain your own self-respect, then, in the name of all that is good and sacred, we call on you to go to work and "Do Something."

R.

XXVIII.

IF YOU WANT TO BE LOVED.

MY DEAR N——,

If you want to be loved remember the following :—

Don't find fault.

Don't contradict people, even if you are sure you are right.

Don't be inquisitive about the affairs of even your most intimate friend.

Don't under-rate anything because you don't possess it.

Don't believe that everybody else in the world is happier than you.

Don't conclude that you have never had any opportunities in life.

Don't believe all the evil you hear.

Don't repeat gossip.

Don't go untidy on the plea that everybody knows you.

Don't over or under dress.

Don't be rude to your inferiors in social position.

Don't express a *positive* opinion unless you perfectly understand what you are talking about.

Don't get in the habit of vulgarising life by making light of the sentiment of it.

Don't jeer at anybody's religious belief.

Don't try to be anything else but a gentleman or a gentlewoman,—and that means a man or a woman who has consideration for the whole world, and whose life is governed by the golden rule, "Do unto others as you would be done by."

R.

XXIX.

EVILS OF A BAD TEMPER.

MY DEAR N——,

It is allied to martyrdom, to be obliged to live with one of a complaining character. To hear one eternal round of complaint and murmuring, to have every pleasant hought scared away by the evil spirit, is in truth a sore trial. It is like the sting of a scorpion—a perpetual nettle, destroying your peace, rendering life a burden. Its influence is most deadly; and the purest and sweetest atmosphere is turned into a deadly miasma wherever this evil genius prevails. It has been said truly, that while we ought not to let the bad tempers of others influence us, it would be as unreasonable to spread a plaster of Spanish flies upon the skin, and not expect it to draw, as to think of a family not suffering because of the bad temper of one of its members. *One string out of tune will destroy the music of an instrument otherwise perfect;* so, if all the members of a neighbourhood and family do not cultivate a kind and affectionate temper there will be discord and evil.

With these few lines I bid you good-bye to-day.

Yours, etc.,

R.

XXX

HOW TO BECOME A STRICT MORAL MAN.

MY DEAR N——,

Begin by examining yourself—what do I do that is bad? Do I not leave undone all resolutions to do good? First distrust self. How can I be good then? By the help of someone else. God alone is perfect. He can help me and because He loves me He will help me. My duty is to ask Him—and to use His Help. I want to come very near to Him, to have my weakness supported by His Strength.

Do you see what I mean? the beginning, middle and end of a holy life is a knowledge of one's own sinfulness, of one's own need of God. So I recommend an examination of your life—to be made not once only, but weekly, daily. Knowing our enemy we shall pray to be delivered from him, and if our prayer is sincere, we shall win grace to resist, and shall use that grace. May God who has given you, dear Friend, the good desire for a holy life, give you also grace to carry out this desire to a good effect.

What is necessary is that you should at once begin a life such that you may obtain the Key to Heaven. What is this key? This key is, to be acquainted with God, just as you are acquainted with your uncle, aunt, and other relations; perhaps you will consider me a mystic. But

what I tell you is real. By making progress in your religious life you will find that God really hears all your prayers and responds to them and then you will be acquainted with Him, i.e., what in common parlance is called holding communion with Him.

The next thing is to observe your subjective and objective duties. By purifying yourself of all manner of sins, dissimulation, white lies, temptations, by educating your soul and mind without wasting a moment of your valuable life, you will be observing your subjective duties; and by making it a rule to do some good to others *every day*, you will be observing your objective duties. If you undergo this *Sadhana*¹, you will have a much better and pleasanter experience of a virtuous or godly life than you can form any idea of by means of mere intellectual knowledge.

Yours affectionately,

R.

¹ *Sadhana* = discipline.

XXXI.

DUTY FIRST, PLEASURE SECOND.

MY DEAR N——,

I wrote you once on “Duty to God and Man.” In this I take the opportunity of telling you how Duty is to be regarded. My mind always advises me to follow the golden rule, “First duty, secondly pleasure.” Said Nasmyth—that admirable inventor of the steam hammer,—“If I were to try to compress into one sentence the whole of the experience I have had during an active and successful life, and offer it to young men and women as a rule and certain receipt for success in any station, it would be comprised in these words—‘*Duty first! Pleasure second!*’” From what I have seen of young men and their after progress, I am satisfied that what is generally termed bad fortune, ill-luck, misfortune, is in nine cases out of ten simply the result of *inertia*. Such experience as I have had convinces me that absence of success arises, in the great majority of cases, from want of self-denial and want of common sense. The worst of all maxims is, ‘Pleasure first! work and duty second!’ ”

* * * *

Your note was given me by K. R. M. at the Somáj, whither I attended Mrs. S—— and Dr. R——; and now I sit down to answer it before I go to bed. If I am at Calcutta when you return,—and I sincerely hope you will come soon, for I very much regret your absence—I shall be happy to hear you sing my favourite song. My mother, together with myself, desires to be affectionately remembered to your mother, and believe me, my dear N——

To remain, your affectionate R.

XXXII.

HELP YOURSELF.

MY DEAR N———,

"Heaven helps those who help themselves." Be self-reliant. Help yourself. Do not become too dependent on anybody. Accept assistance, if it be offered and you need it; but if you have no one to help you do not despond or despair; nerve yourself for the conflict, go to work, do what you can, and the best you can, and continue to do it, and you will succeed. It takes some strain on brain and muscle to develop men and to increase their power. The best thing for a man sometimes, and especially a young man, is to be thrown on his own resources—to be made to feel that he must do or die, that he must exert brain or muscle, that he must plan and labour to secure even the common comforts of life.

We do not know what strength we possess, nor what efforts we can put forth until we are put to the test. Every development of strength, and every successful effort put forth, increases our confidence in ourselves and the confidence of others in us, and places us on a higher level. "God helps them that help themselves," and a man who will not do what he can to succeed in life has no right to expect either God or man to help him.

The question for you to consider is not what you could do under other circumstances, but what you can do in circumstances that actually surround you, and with the appliances at your command. No labour that is right and

lawful is dishonourable. Better soil your hands than your reputation. If you would reach the top of the ladder you must begin at the lowest round. If you do not take the first step you are not likely to take the last.

Go, then, to work. If you cannot get what you desire, take the best you can get. If you have no opportunity to work with your head, work with your hands. Employ your spare time in improving your mind. "Knowledge is power." The more you know the better you will be prepared to work, and the wider will be the field of usefulness that will open up before you. Never think of failure. A man who does the best he can and perseveres, will never fail. Don't you know what Smiles said in his *Self Help* "Time and patience changeth the mulberry leaf into satin."

Epicurus said that, "To know how to wait is the great secret of success." Determine, then, whether others will help you or not, that you will do what you can and help yourself.

Yours affectionately,

R.

XXXIII.

PUNCTUALITY.

MY DEAR N——,

The punctuality of Washington is proverbial. It is said of George III. that an appointment was never ahead of him; of Nelson that one always found him waiting; with Admiral Napier punctuality was a cardinal virtue. It may seem of little moment to be punctual, but "our life is made up of little things." Our attention to them is the index of our character, often the scales by which it is weighed. Punctuality requires no undue exertion, and its influence is a salutary one. Its cultivation seems the more important as we witness the evils of dilatoriness in habit. "Better late than never," transformed into "Better never late," is an excellent maxim.

* * * *

Yours affectionately,

R.

XXXIV.

D R I N K,

THE FIRST ONE AND THE LAST ONE.

MY DEAR N——,

“Drinking:—its beginning and end.” What harm can there be in a social glass of wine? This is a question young men often ask.

Remember that “at the last it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder.” *Not at the first*; if it bit at the first, who would tamper with it?

If the sting came at the beginning of the indulgence, few would be led astray. But the pleasure comes at the first, and the sting at the last; and herein lies the danger of strong drink.

At first, it sparkles and cheers;

At last, it poisons and maddens.

At first, it excites mirth and song;

At last, it produces sorrow and misery.

At first, it is an affair of good feeling and fellowship;

At last, it is an affair of feuds, fighting, and murder.

At first, it may kindle up the countenance to a more animated expression;

At last, it gives redness to the eyes, and bloated deformity to the face.

At first, it may quicken the intellect to unwonted activity, and impart a captivating brilliancy to the conversation;

At last, it emasculates the mind, robs every element of strength, and degrades conversation to idiotic gibbering.

At first, it may stimulate the body to unnatural vigour;

At last, it breaks down the strongest frame, and sends weakness into the limbs and trembling into the flesh.

At first, there may be health enough to resist the pernicious tendency of intoxication, so that with all the pleasures there are few of the pains of indulgence ;

At last, drinkers become victims of loathsome and distressing diseases.

In the beginning, they count themselves of all men most happy ;

In the end, they confess themselves of all men most miserable.

In the beginning, we have a company of fine, strong men ;

In the end, we have a group of dilapidated and vulgar sots.

At the commencement of their career they have access to respectable society ;

At its close, few are willing to be seen in their company.

At first, they have no small pride of character ;

At last, all regard for reputation is overwhelmed in the lust for drink.

The early stages of their dissipation were cheered by temporary prosperity, and the hope of still brighter days to come ; its later periods are darkened by a cloud, which sheds only gloom in the present, and foreshadows a still more dismal future.

At first, they are sustained by a fine flow of spirits ;

At last, they sink in the slough of despondency, and perhaps of mental horror.

At first, it is a cup of exhilaration in the hands of thoughtless youth ;

At last, it is a “Cup of fearful trembling in the hand of an offended God.”

At first, there is a joyful anticipation of good times to come ;

At last, there is “fearful looking for of judgment and of fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.”

At first, it is the wine of pleasant fellowship ;

At last, it is the “wine of the wrath of Almighty God poured out without mixture.”

At first, it is the agreeable excitement of an evening ;

At last, it is the long-drawn agony of perdition !

Yours affectionately,

R.

XXXV.

THE EVILS OF DRUNKENNESS.

MY DEAR N——,

O, N——, the evils of drunkenness are dreadful.

1. It robs the heart of its purity.
2. It exhausts money and property.
3. It is the door of sickness and disease.
4. The root of strifes and quarrels.
5. It makes men naked.
6. Reeling and dancing, idling and cursing. They are detested by all men.
7. Through it men lose that which is their due.
8. What they do obtain they lose.
9. It causes men to waste deeds and words; when they awake it is only to repent.
10. It entails loss of mind and an awakening only to shame and confusion.
11. It destroys physical force.
12. It spoils the countenance and complexion.
13. Heart and mind are led astray.
14. Wisdom and knowledge are beclouded.
15. It destroys the capacity to honour parents.
16. Through it men cannot reverence God.
17. Nor obey the words of good men.
18. Nor the laws of the Empire.
19. It makes friendships with wicked and cruel men.
20. It causes separation from the virtuous and good.

21. It makes men shameless.
22. It easily incites to ferocious anger.
23. It destroys the power to control the passions.
24. It gives men over to evils without limit.
25. It causes them to resist the devout.
26. It produces a heart without reverence.
27. It turns day into night.
28. It makes men infamous in crime and teaches iniquity.
29. It rejects virtuous laws.
30. It drives men far from the true and happy end of Nirvana.
31. It sows the seeds of insanity and madness.
32. It corrupts the body, destroys the life, and causes men to fall into the way of the wicked.

“One name for wine is fountain of misery.”

* * * *

Yours affectionately,

R.

XXXVI.

SMOKING.

MY DEAR N———,

I wish to write you something on "Smoking" to-day. I know that almost all men smoke. Those that do not are so few that they might be counted.

Throughout the world, amongst civilised and half-civilised people and savages, there is a constant craving for stimulants and narcotics; tobacco, which is ranked amongst the latter, is more extensively used than anything else. As it is a scientific axiom that anything that causes a deviation from the normal standard of health in man is injurious, the use of tobacco must be condemned on these grounds if on no other.

But there are other arguments which appeal to any reasoning man. Take any average body of men—among the non-smokers are always found the brightest intellects. It is true that Bismarck smokes, but is he an *intellectual* power? Does not he stand as the embodiment of *vi et armis*? Herr Von Ranke, so immeasurably superior to him intellectually, never smoked, nor did John Stuart Mill or the Earl of Beaconsfield. Both Mr. Gladstone and the Marquis of Salisbury are abstainers; close examination of the *best* intellectual workers will show that they have always been opposed to the use of tobacco. A French writer has thus gathered the opinions of some of his literary countrymen. M. ... found that tobacco after a while caused giddiness,

which disappeared six months after he ceased smoking. He says: "Tobacco, in my opinion, together with alcohol, is the most formidable enemy of intelligence." Angier and Feuillet, Dumas declares, have almost killed themselves through smoking. Taine smokes cigarettes, and says it is a bad habit. Zola says he left off smoking years ago on the advice of a physician. No one will for a moment hold that it is otherwise than injurious to muscular development and power.

In training for athletics tobacco is tabooed. Says Hanlon the sculler:—"The best physical performances can only be secured through absolute abstinence from the use of alcohol and tobacco." There is no doubt whatever —nay, it is well-known—that the deaths of General Grant and of the late Emperor of Germany, the hope of his people, were due to the constant use of tobacco. Says Dr. Drysdale, "Cancer of the lip is seldom seen except in men who smoke;" and Dr. Carpenter tells us, "Smoker's sore throat and diseases of the gums are notorious." It is an incontestable physiological fact that the use of tobacco reduces the temperature of the body. Cases of premature death amongst men show that they are almost always connected with some form of heart-disease. Those men who have succumbed have almost invariably been smokers. Turning to Life Insurance records we find that one of the highest authorities, Dr. Thomson, writes:—"Nearly everyone I have rejected, after examining them for life policies, has brought on an affection of the heart by smoking." That tobacco creates a distaste for plain food and a taste for highly-seasoned dishes is well-known to medical men, and it is the great cause of dyspepsia.

Mr. Critchett, the oculist, said:—"I am constantly con-

sulted by gentlemen for commencing blindness caused solely by great smoking." It would seem that the habit indulged in for its soothing power over the nervous organisation accomplishes the soothing process by destroying the nervous tissue. Sir Benjamin Brodie declared that "the poison of tobacco acts by destroying the function of the brain." In a Russian hospital, in 1886, a member of the surgical staff, Dr. Chadnowski, examined by means of a pump the digestive powers of twelve soldiers, six of them being smokers and six non-smokers. He records that the smokers required seven hours to digest their food, whilst amongst the non-smokers six hours was the mean period required. I trust our young men will be warned. They have enough to contend with and to overcome in the struggle for existence; why should they then weaken themselves by indulging in a vice so destructive of all true manhood ?

Yours affectionately,

R.

XXXVII.

SELF-ESTEEM.

MY DEAR N———,

To write to you is a pleasant task, to acknowledge the receipt of your welcome letter is still more so.

Many persons who most earnestly crave for approval are for ever disappointed, because they fall into the common error of thinking that they ought to have that which they intensely desire.

Nothing is ever gained in this way. No one ever grew rich or famous, or superior in any art or achievement, by idly longing to become so. No one ever gained the esteem of his fellowmen by merely wishing for it. He must acquire the right to be esteemed before he can reasonably expect to be so. He must cultivate qualities worthy of admiration. He must form a character that shall command respect. He must pursue a line of conduct at once honourable and self-respecting.

This alone is the road to the esteem of those whose esteem is worth having. The direct efforts which weak-minded persons make to gain favour by suppressing their real selves and pretending to be what they are not, and thus deluding the public, have only momentary results. In this way they forfeit the reality, and merely earn the contempt and failure which all deceit and hypocrisy deserve.

* * * *

Yours ever,

R.

XXXVIII.

OUR DUTY TO GOD AND MAN.

MY DEAR N——,

This will find you better, I hope. The question you ask is a very wide one, such as you would find answered in some books; you tell me so little of your case that I cannot say much about your own particular duty. But, to put it as simply as possible,

Duty, to God and man, is Love.

First to God because He made you and you are His.

Then, because you cannot see Him, and you can see your fellowman, love him for God's sake.

This means that we are not to consider our own "interest" in the common sense of the word—only in so far as it can make us more capable of seeing God and man—hence, education and self-improvement are good.

But if we are to serve God truly, we must consider our own interest in the true and higher sense. How can we become more and more capable of serving God? Love is what we want, and love means self-sacrifice; giving, as God gave Himself for man, so is man to give his very life if need be for his brethren.

Thus, if a family is to be happy, every son and daughter, father and mother, master and servant, must follow this golden rule of "Self-sacrifice."

The man who cares only for himself knows not the true joy of life, and that is Self-sacrificing Love. By experience one learns that it is more blessed to give than to receive, and that he that loseth his life shall find it.

Is not that duty?

R.

XXXIX.

HUMILITY.

MY DEAR N——,

Your remarks on "Humility" are true; you ask my opinion.

It is nothing better than the general definition that Humility is a temper of mind which makes us slow in taking offence at any slight or disrespect which may be shown to us.

However I should be right glad to comply with your wishes by giving you a more worthy definition. Bishop Jeremy Taylor says of Humility, that it is like the root of a godly tree thrust very far into the ground; and this we know by the godly fruits which appear above ground; of these fruits seventeen varieties. The catalogue is as follows:

1. The humble man trusts not to his own discretion, but in matters of concernment relies rather upon the judgment of his friends, of counsellors, of spiritual guides.
2. He does not pertinaciously pursue the choice of his own will.
3. He does not murmur against commands.
4. He is not inquisitive into the reasonableness of indifferent and innocent commands, but believes their command to be reason enough in such cases to exact his obedience.
5. He lives according to a rule, and without compliance with public customs, without any affectation of singularity.

6. He is meek and indifferent in all accidents and chances.

7. He patiently bears injuries—*Verum humilem patientia ostendit.*

8. He is not always satisfied with his own conduct, resolutions, and counsels.

9. He is a great lover of good men, and a praiser of wise men, and a censurer of no man.

10. He is modest in his speech, and reserved in his laughter.

11. He fears when he hears himself commended.

12. He gives no pert or saucy answers when he is reproved, whether justly or unjustly.

13. He loves to sit down in private, and if he may, he refuses the temptation of offices and new honours.

14. He is ingenuous, free, and open in his actions and discourses.

15. He minds his fault and gives thanks when he is admonished.

16. He is ready to do good to the murderers of his fame, to his slanderers, backbiters and detractors.

17. And is willing to be suspected of indiscretion, so long as he really is innocent, and not offensive to his neighbour, nor negligent of his interest.

These, it may be said, are very many fruits to spring from the one root of humility ; but this is so very great and excellent a virtue that it draws with it most others. Is not the man who has such qualities a humble one ?

Yours affectionately,

R.

XL

GOLDEN RULES.

Bear these Golden rules always in mind.

Hold integrity sacred.

Observe good manners.

Endure trials patiently.

Be prompt in all things.

Make good acquaintances.

Shun the company of the idle.

Dare to do right, fear to do wrong.

Watch carefully over your temper.

Never be afraid of being laughed at.

Fight life's battle manfully and bravely.

Use your leisure moments for study.

Sacrifice money rather than principle.

Yours affectionately,

R.

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